Quotes By Indian Women

Compiled by

asha dua

SHOUT
SHARE
IT

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Alka
PAPERBACKS

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For Karen, a friend,
more than
a daughter-in-law . . .

Acknowledgement

I would like to thank Sadhana Ramchander who has helped me put this book together, and for her assistance at all times, without demur. My special thanks to Kavita Deuskar for her sketches. She is a lecturer in painting in the College of Fine Arts and Architecture in Hyderabad. She is a well known artist and has done several paintings, and murals in different media. She excels in pencil drawings, both black and white and colour. My special congratulations to the author of 'Women Writing in India' Vol I & Vol II - which helped me to understand the social status & relationship of the women in the man dominated household in the gone by era.

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Foreword

'Weaker sex'—the term could perhaps apply to women in terms of physical strength, the exceptions being the female bodybuilders or wrestlers. However, mentally, intellectually, and emotionally, woman is far from weak. Women down the ages have had their own viewpoints. The fact that their words remain unspoken, their songs unsung, is another matter. With the passage of time, the scenario has changed. Women are storming so-called exclusive male domains, showing that as one half of humanity, they too have a tale to tell.

In India, a woman is associated with conflicting stereotypes. Sati Savitri on the one hand, a fiery Durga or Kali on the other. This results in dowry deaths being juxtaposed against women achievers like a woman prime minister. The average Indian woman is versatile with multi-faceted interests and convictions. She speaks her mind unabashedly on topics ranging from politics, religion, and culture to love, sex, and marriage.

Here then, is my choice of quotes by Indian women. There are quotes from the past, interwoven with quotes from the present-day, outstanding Indian women—actresses, journalists, sportswomen, businesswomen, housewives....

This book is a tribute to women, by a woman, for women. By portraying perceptions about different issues in life, it quintessences life itself.

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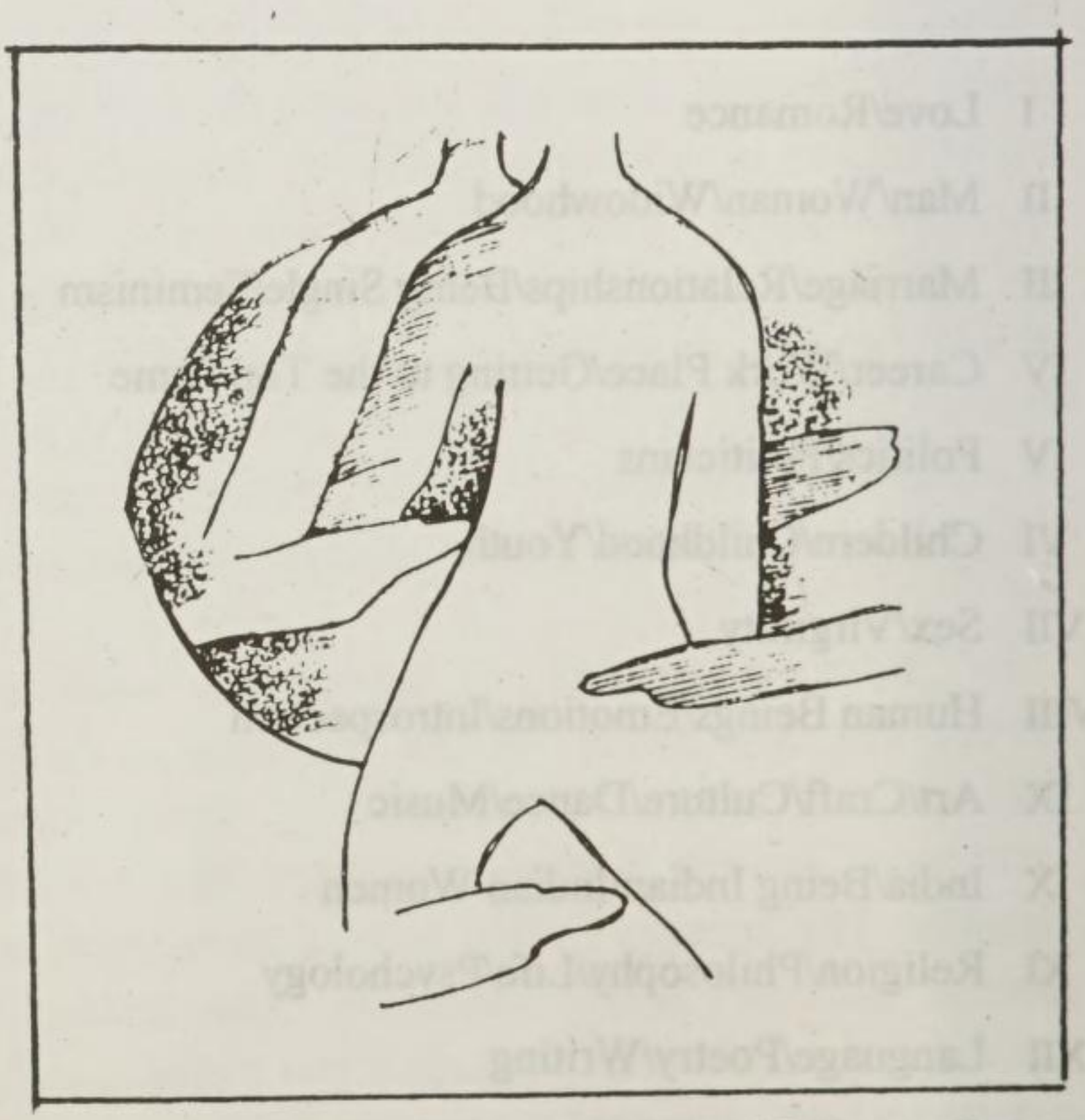
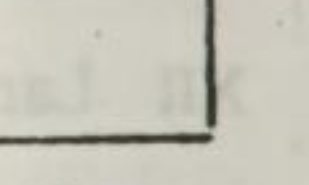




I

Love / Romance

Love, like a visitor, drops in sometimes
with the slightest of smiles, leaves mementos behind
all over the house, then in flash disappears.

Vijaya Mukhopadhyay

◆ ◆ ◆

In spite of destruction and death,
love between human beings will always
exist and survive.

Dr Indira Goswami

◆ ◆ ◆

Falling in love and getting married
is not always a bed of roses.

Asha Dua

◆ ◆ ◆

The notion of romance is one thing,
actual reality quite another.

Rais Fatima

◆ ◆ ◆

...there is very little difference between filial love in childhood and conjugal love in youth. As in the case of one's beloved in one's youth, our parents are only objects of dependence, worship, and love in childhood. Both the loves have the same symptoms —a constant craving to be near the loved one.

Swarnakumari Devi (Bengali)
1856-1932

◆ ◆ ◆

...Love is the basis for marriage,
education and economic independence
for women.

Kashibai Kantikar (Marathi)
1861-1948

◆ ◆ ◆

There is no shortage of men who come
in lust and charm us with their talk of romance;
but which of them would give his heart to test
whether we have hearts too?

Binodini Dasi (Bengali)
1863-1941

◆ ◆ ◆

Money cannot buy anyone's love...
cannot sell our love for money.

Binodini Dasi (Bengali)
1863-1941

◆ ◆ ◆

Why ask me, why not ask yourself
how love began, what it has ended in?
In the vale of love they all went their ways,
My heart alone remained with me,
my companion and friend.
What grief, what pain has come to Janaki from one
Of whose kindness and favour she was once so proud.

Janaki Bai (Urdu)
Born 1889

◆ ◆ ◆

The one with whom we always live
is not called love but worry.

Vijaya Mukhopodhyay
('In their own voice')

◆ ◆ ◆

Distance in love and death
often make for greater objectivity.

Asha Dua

◆ ◆ ◆

I am pale with longing for my beloved;
people believe I am ill...

Mira Bai
Ca 1498-1565

◆ ◆ ◆

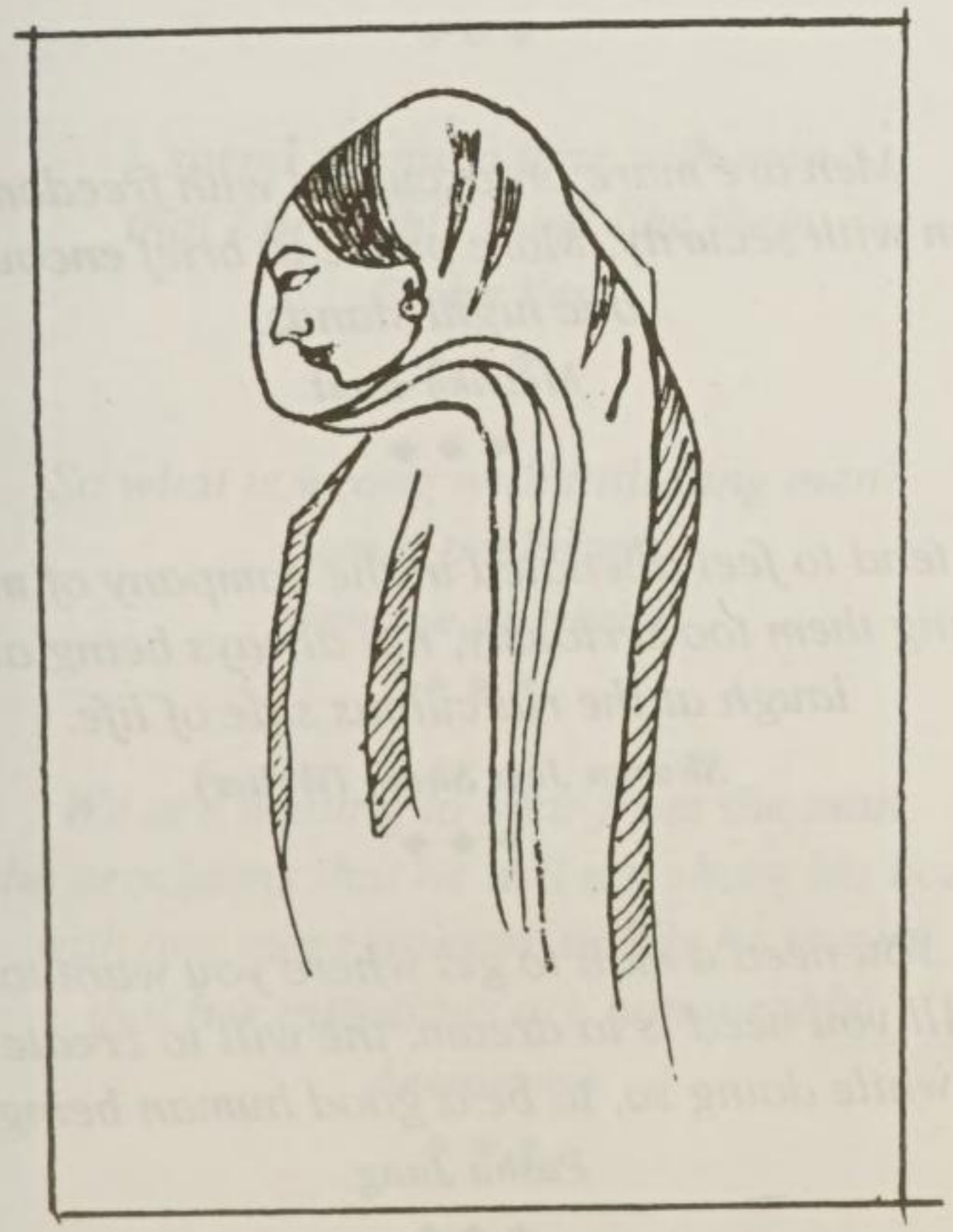
How can Chanda be dry lipped,
O sagi of the heavenly wines!
She has drained the cup of thy love.

Mahlaqa Bai Chanda (Urdu)
1767-1824

◆ ◆ ◆

Bring no fragrant sandal paste,
let me gather love instead;
the entranced and flowering dust,
You have honoured with your tread
for mine eyelids and mine head.

Sarojini Naidu (English)
1879-1949



II

Man/Woman/Widowhood

Men are more preoccupied with freedom
than with security. More prone to brief encounters,
one night stands.

Malvika Kaul

◆ ◆ ◆

I tend to feel alienated in the company of men,
taking them too seriously, not always being able to
laugh at the ridiculous side of life.

Sharan Jeet Sham (Writer)

◆ ◆ ◆

You need a man to get where you want to.
All you need is to dream, the will to create it
while doing so, to be a good human being.

Pasha Jung

◆ ◆ ◆

I believe I hold the sole prerogative to decide
whether I want to accept a man's passes or not.
Who the hell is he to force his advances on me?

Renuka Choudhary (Member of Parliament)

◆ ◆ ◆

I spend so much time with men
that I probably think like them.

Gladys Vaz

◆ ◆ ◆

So what is wrong with titillating men?
I am a performer.

Jasmine Bharucha

◆ ◆ ◆

We are waiting to hear from the man
who proclaims that he will not share his body
with one more woman, unless he is sure
that her intentions are honourable.

Anonymous

◆ ◆ ◆

A man can portray the female psyche better
as he does so without the trappings of a woman.

Madhu Jain

◆ ◆ ◆

A woman does not have to give in to anyone,
at least, not until it is a rape.

Rais Fatima

◆ ◆ ◆

There was an incompleteness in me.
I had so much energy that it would explode sexually
in affairs, in high-bravado antics,
in anything for a lark.

Protima Bedi (Dancer and Actress)

◆ ◆ ◆

Women are natural managers.

Margaret Alva (Member of Parliament)

◆ ◆ ◆

Women need a mouse in the house,
a stud in bed, and an ass to pay the bills.

Raveena Tandon (Film actress)

◆ ◆ ◆

Women by nature are more organised
and progressive in their approach.

Dr Chandroma Anand

◆ ◆ ◆

The majority of women give in rather than
rebel against parental pressure to conform.

Sharan Jeet Shan (Writer)

◆ ◆ ◆

Woman is a special human being, a messenger of peace,
a symbol of spiritual strength, a creator.

asha dua

◆ ◆ ◆

Temptation becomes a bigger problem for men
who are very successful, especially the kind of success
that puts them in limelight.

Malvika Kaul

◆ ◆ ◆

To justify his behaviour (my husband) would say,
"a woman attains paradise not by virtue of
any austere penance but as a result of her
obedience and devotion to her husband."

Sharan Jeet Shan (Writer)

◆ ◆ ◆

Discriminating against menopausal women
by refusing them IVF and egg donation simply based
on their age smacks of paternalism and sexism.

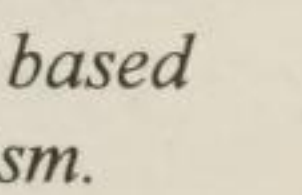
Dr Anuradha Malpani

◆ ◆ ◆

I believe in parliament, if a woman is articulate,
attractive and aggressive, then she is a 'cheez.'
It is ludicrous! I may be a public servant, but I am
certainly not public entertainment.

Renuka Choudhary (Member of Parliament)

◆ ◆ ◆



When a woman manages money, things are always smoother... because a woman is an instinctive money manager.

Margaret Alva (Member of Parliament)

◆ ◆ ◆

The usual idea of woman relates to her activities and functions; little thought is given to her qualities.

Rukmini Devi Arundale

◆ ◆ ◆

I may not belong to a royal family. I may not have any blue blood, but I definitely do have the blood of a woman. And it is this blood that is forcing me to speak... to reveal the so-called class of the royal family I was married into— my husband was ready to pimp for me.

Rajnee Singh

◆ ◆ ◆

...A working woman and a housewife are successful. When you are born, a woman has to have both the qualities to keep your man happy.

Nandini Narayan Singh

◆ ◆ ◆

Women should be feminine and
not let a little success, and a few kudos
gained in today's manly world
go to their heads.

Zohra Hussain

◆ ◆ ◆

In today's liberated world, men can,
and often do, postpone marriage in order
to experience sex with as many women
as possible.

Malvika Kaul

◆ ◆ ◆

I want her (my daughter) to be free of guilt. The guilt
of being an unmarried woman, a nonworking wife,
a working wife, a nonworking caring mother,
a working negligent mother! I want her to be not guilty,
free from the dilemmas that have riddled our lives.
I'd likes her to experience the joy of partnership
in marriage and be a professional highflier.

Mridula Sood

◆ ◆ ◆

We are not there where decisions that move
and shake the world are taken. We do not sit
in the cabinet committes. When we do, we have a point
of view, but the men have a policy.

Chitra Subramanian (Journalist)

◆ ◆ ◆

Getting out of the rut in spite of odds and carving a niche for yourself is not very difficult, if one is relentlessly persistent.

Nirmal Mirza

◆ ◆ ◆

Women are not people to be pitied.

Dipti Naval (Actress)

◆ ◆ ◆

A woman is never truly free to do as she pleases.

Suzanne Sabloak (Model)

◆ ◆ ◆

What they rarely stress is that in an unequal world women suffer more, work harder and get paid less.

Chitra Subramanian (Journalist)

◆ ◆ ◆

A wife becomes her husband's better half and she spends her time trying to ape his gestures and words verbatim, she is but wasting her time. She should instead be a foil for his masculine qualities by being herself feminine.

Rani Sunita Devi

◆ ◆ ◆

At 10, woman is like a mountain spring.
At 20, a bubbling brook of pure freshness.
At 30, like a small, fast flowing stream with rough rapids to tide over. At 40, she becomes like a deep slow river, not so swift but with the power to wash away anything that comes in her path. At 50, she can be like a vast lake of sparkling blue, rippling gently and benignly.

Pramila L. Kumar

◆ ◆ ◆

We should never forget that women have more appeal when they are themselves, i.e., utterly feminine.

Zohra Hussain

◆ ◆ ◆

A woman has become a purchasable commodity.
She can burn with less reverence than an aggarbatti.

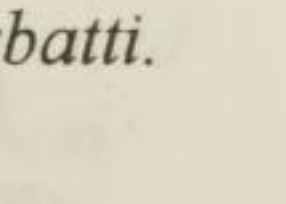
Renuka Choudhary (Member of Parliament)

◆ ◆ ◆

Every woman is responsible for playing her role well, be it a mother, mother-in-law, wife, etc. One should inculcate the principle of simple living and high thinking, through which society should be built.

Suman Krishan Kant
(Wife of Mr. Krishan Kant, Governor of Andhra Pradesh)

◆ ◆ ◆



The former communist countries packed their parliaments with women—where are they now? A democracy is no prerequisite. Switzerland, the world's oldest democracy did not allow women to vote till the early 70s.

Chitra Subramanian (Journalist)

◆ ◆ ◆

If you can show Sita's agony then why not the modern woman's?

Shanta Dhananjay

◆ ◆ ◆

A woman was a gift of God because she gives birth to a human being. A woman shows man what loving, caring and sharing is all about.

Sushmita Sen

◆ ◆ ◆

Women are more religious and God fearing, and this keeps them from actively participating in corruption, though passively I think, even women do sanction corruption.

Anita Choudhary

◆ ◆ ◆

I would categorically state that women are less corrupt than men. I think this has something to do with their role as child bearers and rearers. It is women who produce society and they feel it most when they see it degenerating.

Rama Pilot

◆ ◆ ◆

Women make better leaders because they happen to be more goal oriented and dedicated.

Linda Dias

◆ ◆ ◆

A woman's communicating skills are far better than man's.

Dr Chandroma Anand

◆ ◆ ◆

From bubbling teenager, to nervous bride, to harassed mother, to contented grandmother—every woman goes through these crossroads in her life...

Pramila L Kumar

◆ ◆ ◆

Men too have strong yearnings for monogamy. It may not be their first choice sexually, but they are attracted by the stability of life shared with one woman.

Malvika Kaul

◆ ◆ ◆

If you educate a man you educate a person,
but if you educate a woman, you educate a family.

Ruby Manikan

◆ ◆ ◆

Only as women triumph over the frustrations
of their womanhood... will men themselves regain
their own manhood and nobility.

Rukmini Devi Arundale

◆ ◆ ◆

...When older men become fathers, they are
considered macho and virile. But when an older woman
tries to or has a baby, she is either pitied or becomes
the butt of ribald jokes.

Dr Indira Hinduja

◆ ◆ ◆

I knew right from the start that I could do
single-handed what forty men can do.

Rita Sena

◆ ◆ ◆

Women have much more fun when they are together, because everything gets stripped down to the basics.

My advice to men is loosen up, you are missing out on a lot.

Men are more cut and dry, and talk of each other rather than to each other, and in all, they are rather boring when they get together.

Sharon Prabhakar

◆ ◆ ◆

Why not leave the poor men alone, and let them continue to believe they are superior to us women?

Zohra Hussain

◆ ◆ ◆

Men place women somewhere between human and animal...

Arunaraje Patil

◆ ◆ ◆

Shock, disbelief. These are the first reactions of people who see me operate a slide-way grinding machine on the workshop floor. This is a man's job, the machine being heavy and large, almost hitting the ceiling of the factory shed.

Jyoti Rajendra

◆ ◆ ◆

When a man falls in love with
a married woman, he never asks her to
break up her marriage for him.
But a woman in love with a married man
will ask him to do that. Men never
break up marriages. Women do.

Arunaraje Patil

◆ ◆ ◆

Women are such fools
—they make their men the beginning and end
of their existence.

Rais Fatima

◆ ◆ ◆

My husband is my biggest support. If he
decides to leave his job and get out from the city,
I too will go with him, never mind if my career
is soaring to dizzying heights. I am of the opinion
that a husband is supreme.

Rita Bhimani

◆ ◆ ◆

The real change will occur once the woman voter
stands up and says she is not going to vote
for the person her husband suggests.

Pramila Dandavate

◆ ◆ ◆

Wearing the pants in the house no longer carried the cachet it once had. The contemporary woman, more self assured, could do a man-sized job and be feminine as well. Ditto for the man. He could be comfortable around the house without being considered a sissy or a wimp.

Geetanjali Prasad

◆ ◆ ◆

The police force is largely masculine. But a woman is capable of doing a masculine job better than a man, thanks to her sober and soothing qualities.

Sree Lekha
(Additional Inspector General of Police)

◆ ◆ ◆

If you are a man and start taking decisions, people think you are decisive and a leader. But as a woman you're considered aggressive and dominating—so there is a little difference.

Tara Sinha
(Revolutionary Advertising Professional)

◆ ◆ ◆

Women should never become like men. We are intuitive, sensitive and caring, while men are inaccessible.

Kiran Bedi

◆ ◆ ◆

Most Indian men are insecure with
an apparently self sufficient woman. They love
to be the providers and to call the shots.
And they manipulate the woman to bend
till she no longer has a spine.

Pritibha Prahlad

◆ ◆ ◆

I don't regard myself as a woman. I regard
myself as a person with a job. I feel neither excited
nor nervous. This is just another job I have to do.

Indira Gandhi

◆ ◆ ◆

I believe that if you educate a woman,
you educate an entire family.

Dr. Snehalata Deshmukh
(Vice Chancellor, Bombay University)

◆ ◆ ◆

I would not be unhappy being just a wife and mother.

Sushma Swaraj

◆ ◆ ◆

Few men recognise that women also work
to fulfill their own ambitions.

Girija Prabhakar

◆ ◆ ◆

Is this my fate that I am woman? Just because I am a woman, does it necessarily mean that trying to educate myself is a crime?

Rassundari Devi (Bengali)
Born: 1810

◆ ◆ ◆

What right have you to make me shave my head and sit in a corner? I am married to God and no one can make me a widow.

Tarigonda Venkamamba (Telugu)
Ca 1800-86

◆ ◆ ◆

There is male jealousy. It shoots up when a woman does something credit worthy... The male ego is very much bothered about it.

Sree Lekha
(Additional Inspector General of Police)

◆ ◆ ◆

....feel ashamed and hurt by the realization that even if a woman has lived her life fully, has brought up her children and leaves behind her sons and daughter to carry on, her widowhood is still considered a misfortune.

Rassundari Devi (Bengali)
Born: 1810

◆ ◆ ◆

Women are traditionally charged with the responsibility of preserving societal ' purity' and maintaining its norms. When they rebel, they are policed and punished in a thousand ways that rarely touch the men.

Savitħribai Phule (Marathi)
1831-1897, First woman teacher in Maharashtra

◆ ◆ ◆

Powerless dull woman, prisoner within a Maratha household... in the face of male treachery, duplicity, and faithlessness... she is forced to adopt a crude and blunt manner.

Tarabai Shinde (Marathi)
Ca 1850-1910

◆ ◆ ◆

People put birds in cages for their own amusement... I was like a caged-bird... have to remain in this cage for life.

Rassundari Devi (Bengali)
Born: 1810

◆ ◆ ◆

Though everyday we see new and more terrible examples of men's violence, audacity and cunning, no one pays attention to these. Instead, people continue to heap the burden of all wrongs on to the women themselves.

Tarabai Shinde (Marathi)
Ca 1850-1910

◆ ◆ ◆

I was a woman, shut up like a thief—even trying
to learn was considered an offence.

Rassundari Devi (Bengali)
Born 1810

◆ ◆ ◆

Given a chance, a woman can rule and administer
as wisely and well as, or even better than a man.

Kashibai Kantikar (Marathi)
1861-1948

◆ ◆ ◆

Woman's idea of happiness... first a husband
of her choice, one whom she can love. Once their
hearts are united, she will not worry about poverty...
suffer hunger or thirst and put up with any harassment
for the sake of the man she loves.

Tarabai Shinde (Marathi)
1850-1910

◆ ◆ ◆

Even in affection there was discrimination—
and not only in affection, it was there in motherly love!
Even a mother loved and cared more for a son than
for a daughter.

Sarat Kumari Chaudhurani (Bengali)
1861-1920

◆ ◆ ◆

The gap that exists between the intellectual abilities of men and women is entirely our creation. It is not a result of a natural or inherent disability of girls.

Bandaru Acchamamba (Telugu)
1874-1904

◆ ◆ ◆

Instead of returning to Manu's dictum that 'women are unfit to be free' and reducing women to uselessness, men should help women to extend their knowledge.

Kalyanamma (Kannada)
1894-1965

◆ ◆ ◆

...If only men shed their selfish and partisan attitudes and decided to educate, and encourage in women, the desire to acquire specialized knowledge, women will also display ability equal to those of men... proving they are 'better halves' not merely in name but in reality.

Bandaru Acchamamba (Telugu)
1874-1904

◆ ◆ ◆

However shameless a woman may be, she will never throw herself into the arms of a strange man. That is an eternal truth.

Tarabai Shinde (Marathi)
Ca 1850-1910

◆ ◆ ◆

...We have become puppets in the hands of fear ...
men have pushed us further and further aside. If only
we had retained courage and fortitude of the women
of our past, many brave men like Rana Pratap of
Mewar would have born.

Kalyanamma (Kannada)
1894-1965

◆ ◆ ◆

(On slavery)
...You may not believe that until recently,
I had never even witnessed a sunset...

Geeta Sane (Marathi)
Born 1907

◆ ◆ ◆

The cold earth
beneath the feet,
the oppressive roof
above the head,
four high walls
surround me
on the four sides.

Indira Sant (Marathi)
Born 1914

◆ ◆ ◆

Independence is something we have never been familiar with. No one seems to need the daughter of the house even as much as they need the cow.

Geeta Sane (Marathi)
Born 1907

◆ ◆ ◆

The Muslim middle class considered education unnecessary, even harmful for girls.

Ismat Chugtai (Urdu)
1915-1991

◆ ◆ ◆

Ever since I can remember, I have been hearing, seeing and learning that a woman shouldn't try to compete with a man. Even before we could distinguish between men and women, we were taught, 'I am a woman, I should suffer all the injustices perpetuated by men without complaint.'

Geeta Sane (Marathi)
Born 1907

◆ ◆ ◆

A woman becomes untouchable every month when she sees her own blood and must sit apart for three days.

M.K. Indira (Kannada)
Born 1917

◆ ◆ ◆

The moment a daughter is born, the parents are saddled with a burden. The elders begin to think about to her marriage even before the babe opens her eyes. Strife begins in the house because of her, while she is still a child—when she should be laughing, playing and enjoying her life.

Geeta Sane (Marathi)
Born 1907

◆ ◆ ◆

Society attacks anyone who dares to say its coins are counterfeit, but when it is a woman who says this, society begins to foam at the mouth. It puts aside all its theories, arguments and picks up the weapon of filth to fling at her.

Amrita Pritam (Hindi)
Born 1919

◆ ◆ ◆

Woman does not worship her husband as a person, but as an ideal; the basis of woman's attention to boost her own self-importance.

K. Saraswathi Amma (Malayalam)
1919-1975

◆ ◆ ◆

(During the Telangana struggle in Andhra Pradesh):

Peasant girls worked as slaves in the landlord's house
and when the landlord's daughters married,
these girls were often sent away with them
to serve as concubines.

Dudala Salamma (Telugu)
Born 1925

◆ ◆ ◆

....not to say that all the women in the world
are as luminous as the sun, and as pure as the waters
of the Holy Ganges. But even if one takes into account
the entire female community in the world, it would
be difficult to come across more than 10 per cent of them
who are caught in the whirlwind of such
insidious perfidies...

Tarabai Shinde (Marathi)
1850-1910

◆ ◆ ◆

.... a liberated woman is an outcast in our society,
a miserable creature, with no sympathy or support
from anywhere... perhaps this is a transitional period.
She is yet to emerge as the truly New Woman who can defy
everything that binds her and yet be free. It is a slow,
painful, trying and uphill task.

Veena Shanteshwar (Kannada)

◆ ◆ ◆

Our country has been free for a quarter of a century
now and yet we find our women bound in slavery.
The causes: 25 per cent tradition, another 25 per cent
circumstances, and the remaining 50 per cent men.
We must open our eyes to the realities around us.
Protest against the injustice we suffer.

Veena Shanteshwar (Kannada)

◆ ◆ ◆

The pallav of my sari
falls away (a scandal!)
yet I will enter
the crowded market place
without a thought.

Janabi (Marathi)
Ca 1298-1350

◆ ◆ ◆

...the basic attitudes have not changed.
The man still wants his woman to be
helpless and dependent.

Anuradha Potdar (Marathi)
Born 1927

◆ ◆ ◆

The widower's mind dwells on the fact that
his wife-to-be has lived with someone else,
but he is quite astonished when he finds that
she has had similar thoughts.

Chudamani Raghavan (Tamil)

◆ ◆ ◆

The vedas cried aloud, the, puranas shout
'No good may come to woman
If a woman's body is so harmful
How in this world will I reach truth?
They are foolish, seductive, deceptive—
Any connection with a woman is disastrous.'

Bahinabai Choudhari (Marathi)
1628-1700

◆ ◆ ◆

In the womb, they're the same
when they're growing they're the same.
Later the girl will take, with love what's given;
the boy will take his share by force.

Late 17th century (Kannada)

◆ ◆ ◆

Let me not be sad because I am born a woman.
In this world many saints suffer in this way.

Janabi (Marathi)
Ca 1298-1350

◆ ◆ ◆

My duty is to serve my husband for he
is God to me. My husband himself
is a supreme brahma.

...the vedas in fact, say that it is the husband
who has the authority in the matter of the
religious duties, earthly possession,
desires, and salvation.

...determination and the desire of my heart.
I want my thoughts concentrated on my husband.

Bahinabai Choudhari (Marathi)
1628-1700

◆ ◆ ◆

When the wife of an old man dies, he marries
a young ten-year old girl, and often by the time
she grows up he dies, obviously this is widowhood
that her parents actually invite for her.

Anonymous (Marathi)
1881-1889

◆ ◆ ◆

The vermilon mark
is wiped off my forehead
only the tattoo remains
to welcome fate.

The bangles are broken
but the wrists can still
wrestle with fate
The mangalsutra
no more graces my neck
but the vows taken
hand on the neck
still endure.

Bahinabai Choudhari (Marathi)
1880-1951

◆ ◆ ◆

...There is nothing in our fate but suffering from birth to death. When our husbands are alive, we are their slaves, when they die, our fate is even worse.

A widow

◆ ◆ ◆

Widows who had been shaved
by untouchable barbers remained pure.
But an unshaven widow, even if she is
not touched by a man is impure.

M.K. Indira (Kannada)
Born 1917

◆ ◆ ◆

...The British government put a ban
on the custom of sati, but as a result of that,
several women who could have died a cruel, but
quick death when their husbands died, now have
to face an agonizingly slow death.

A widow

◆ ◆ ◆

In a starving household, a widow has no time
to bewail the loss of a husband.

Binapani Mohanty (Oriya)

◆ ◆ ◆

A woman whose husband is dead
is like a living corpse.

A widow

◆ ◆ ◆

III

Marriage/Relationships Being single/Feminism

Some social scientists describe dowry as a father's gift to his daughter to increase her prestige. In practice, it was and still is the cause of death and destruction.

Sharan Jeet Shan (Writer)

◆ ◆ ◆

In India, a marriage is more a signal for merriment and splurging, than an occasion to bless the happy couple.

Ire Pande

◆ ◆ ◆

Creativity is the key to building a richer, stronger bond with your partner.

Sherry Suib Cohen

◆ ◆ ◆

I can't marry just to have a man and children in my life... I will marry only when I feel I have found the right man. I don't want an unhappy marriage or a devil-like husband, I will be choosy.

Asha Chandra

◆ ◆ ◆

No matter how good, how genuine or how self-sacrificing a daughter-in-law is, she can never be a daughter in the true sense to her in-laws.

Arunaraje Patil

◆ ◆ ◆

Q. Don't the past affairs of your husband make you feel insecure?

A. I believe in that beautiful adage, "if you love something, set it free; if it comes back, it is yours, if it does not, it never was."

Sukanya

◆ ◆ ◆

My step-mother-in-law said that my body belonged to my husband who had every right to misuse it... if in the process I died, I would be remembered as a 'sati'.

Meeta Mohini

◆ ◆ ◆

A loving relationship does not have to sizzle to be fulfilling.

Malvika Kaul

◆ ◆ ◆

I would say—have your damn affair, but don't break up your home. If you cannot give your wife love and sex, give her at least your protection. How many marriages are based on love anyway? More than sex and love, marriage is a commitment.

Arunaraje Patil

◆ ◆ ◆

The greatest tribute to a dear husband and a beautiful successful relationship is to continue to be at the helm of affairs, and keep moving with the help of the home, children, family, and true friends and useful activities, and to make a concerted effort to conquer the urge to give in to self pity, defeat and despair.

Janaki Bhattacharya

◆ ◆ ◆

I don't care if the man is married or not, younger or older. If I like somebody, I will proceed if I get the right response from him.

Rupa Ganguly (Actress)

◆ ◆ ◆

I don't want to be a doormat, nor he
(her boyfriend Miland Soman) a puppy dog.
We have to make certain compromises.

Madhu Sapre

◆ ◆ ◆

There is a thin line between marriage
and death ceremony.

Asha Dua

◆ ◆ ◆

Actually I'm not out for these long-term relationships.
I'm like a free bird which cannot be tied. I hate to be
saddled to any one anchor, I have to be free.

Pratibha

◆ ◆ ◆

I do not flirt with my relationships.
Meeting people is an education by itself.
I have learnt a lot from people.

Dilshad

◆ ◆ ◆

Being single is tough. Even if I had my father,
mother and six aunts beside me I would still be
linked with every man I talk to.

Zeba Bakhtiar

◆ ◆ ◆

By keeping myself persistently single, I have converted myself into permanent public temptation.

Meenakshi Seshadri (Actress)

◆ ◆ ◆

Being single is not my choice.

Rekha (Actress)

◆ ◆ ◆

I have remained single all my life... I feel that if you want to reach anywhere in life you have to work hard... work gets top priority.

Justice Fatima Beebi

◆ ◆ ◆

Feminism, in the opinion of the guys, is a disease which can be cured if certain symptoms are removed.

C S Laxmi

◆ ◆ ◆

...the hurt and unpleasantness does not matter that much... I am sorry, though, to have missed the most wonderful thing in life—having a complete and perfect relationship with another human being.

Indira Gandhi

◆ ◆ ◆

A brother occupies a very special position in the Indian family, and the brother-sister relationship is a cultivated and meaningful one. He is the 'protector' of his sisters and in many cases their hero. To me Bhai (meaning 'brother') was a knight sans peur et reproche.

Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit
(First Woman President of the United National General Assembly)

◆ ◆ ◆

Behno tum maa kali ka roop ho.
Atyachar sehna band karo,
baghawat kar do, chahe koe bhi ho.
(Sisters, you are the incarnation of Mother Kali. Stop suffering suppression. Revolt against whoever it might be.)

Phoolan Devi (A dacoit)

◆ ◆ ◆

I am definitely not a feminist type.
I think in a relationship, the man should lead mostly.
The girl should get her freedom but that does not mean you get overboard with the freedom bit.

Raageshwari (Actress)

◆ ◆ ◆

...Too many marriages doomed for disaster pretend that romance and lust are ingredients of a potentially successful marriage.

Vimla Patil (Journalist)

◆ ◆ ◆

Everybody is maladjusted in early married life.

Indira Gandhi

◆ ◆ ◆

If a man and a woman have a similar taste,
nature, habits and ambitions, their marriage is
far happier than others.

Hannah Catherine Mullens (Bengali)
1826-1861

◆ ◆ ◆

I do not count my losses—you do not need to do either.
I do not wish to marry for convenience. Since your
happiness does not depend on it, I beg to be released.

Swarnakumari Devi (Bengali)
1856-1932

◆ ◆ ◆

After the marriage ceremony is concluded,
the boy takes his bride home and delivers her over
to his own mother, who becomes, from that time until
the girl grows old enough to be given to her husband,
her sole mistress, and who wields over the
daughter-in-law, undisputed authority!

Pandita Ramabai Saraswati (English)
1858-1922

◆ ◆ ◆

I was like a cart tied to the Deccan Queen
*(*a superfast train*) in full speed, bumping and crashing*
along behind him. When he slowed down, it gave me
enough time to understand which way he was going.
Then our carriage ran smooth on the rails... was like
a steam engine, running on his own power, and I like
a carriage that ran on the speed imported by the engine.

Lakshmibai Tilak (Marathi)
1868-1936

◆ ◆ ◆

The term marriage does not mean anything
more than an irrevocable betrothal.

Pandita Ramabai Saraswati (English)
1858-1922

◆ ◆ ◆

A bride's value is only to keep the lineage alive;
for what else does one take on the burden of bringing
in an unwanted girl from another family?

Sarat Kumari Chaudhurani (Bengali)
1861-1920

◆ ◆ ◆

Wives have never known from the beginning
what freedom is, they are generally well content to
remain in bondage; there is, however, no such thing
as the family having pleasant times together.

Pandita Ramabai Saraswati (English)
1858-1922

◆ ◆ ◆

....Jewellery reminded me... of my slavery. It was to this jewellery that father had sold me. Because of this jewellery I had lost my freedom and become someone's slave.

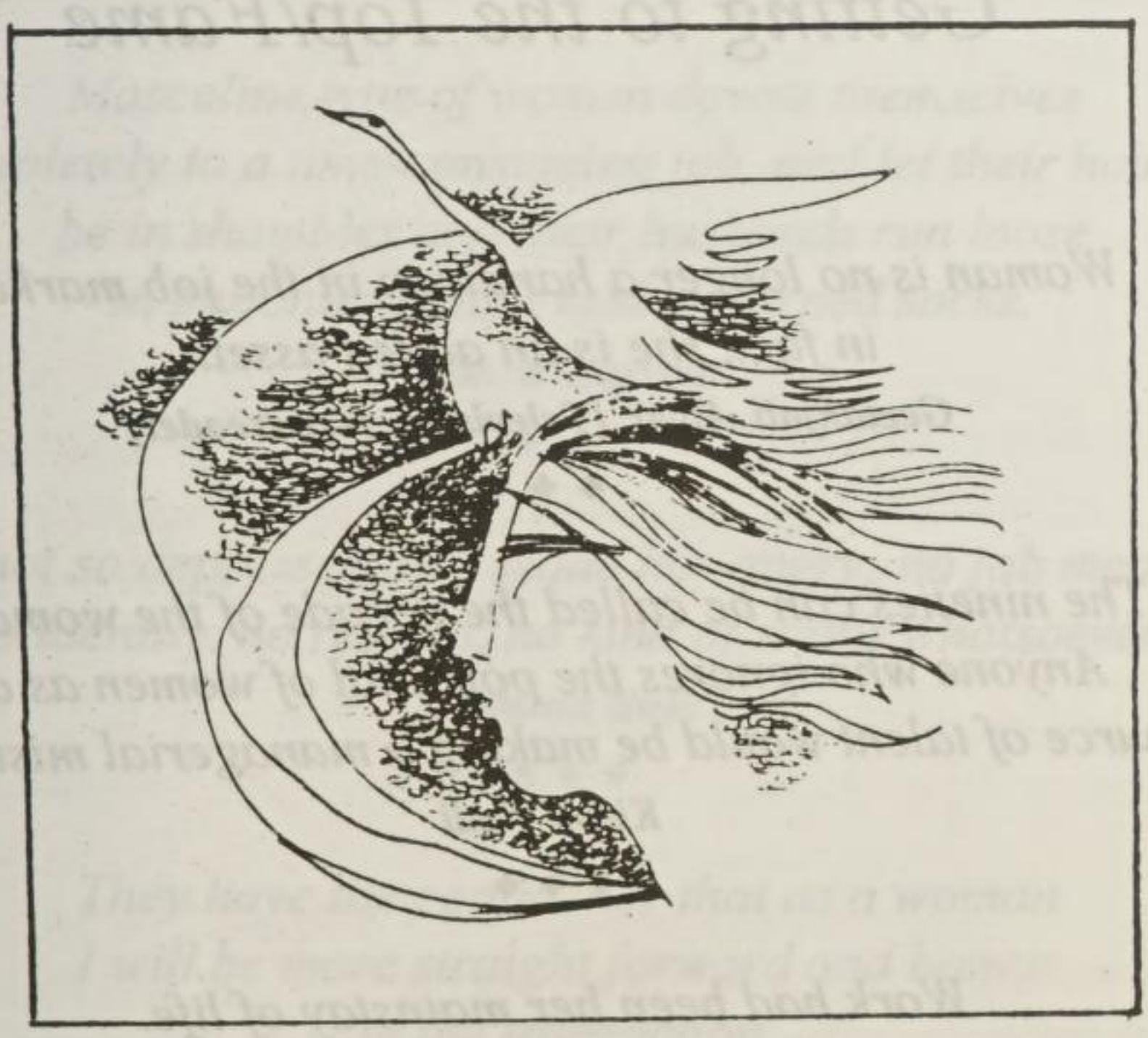
Indira Sahasrabuddhe (Marathi)
Born Ca 1890

◆ ◆ ◆

....The whole business of marriage seemed to be dreadful—sex, cooking, beatings from the mother-in law and all the other in-laws.

Ismat Chugtai (Urdu)
1915-1991

◆ ◆ ◆



IV

Career/Work Place/ Getting to the Top/Fame

Woman is no longer a handicap in the job market, in fact, she is an added asset.

Geetanjali Aiyar (Television Newsreader)

◆ ◆ ◆

The nineties can be called the decade of the woman. Anyone who ignores the potential of women as a source of talent would be making a managerial mistake.

Kiran Bedi

◆ ◆ ◆

Work had been her mainstay of life. Retirement meant bidding both her material and emotional anchor goodbye.

Jamuna Sujir

◆ ◆ ◆

The policeman's image will continue to sag unless a sustained effort is made to improve his lot.

Aruna Bahuguna (Police officer)

◆ ◆ ◆

Economic and social development is only possible with the full and equal participation of women.

Jassica Mahadevan (Journalist)

◆ ◆ ◆

Masculine type of women devote themselves completely to a time-consuming job, and let their houses be in shambles and their husbands run loose in buttonless shirts and undarned socks.

Zohra Hussain

◆ ◆ ◆

...not so depressed as it made her angry; no job meant no identity, no respect, no kind of status whatsoever.

Jamuna Sujir

◆ ◆ ◆

They have the confidence that as a woman I will be more straight forward and honest in the transaction.

Devyani Shinde

◆ ◆ ◆

Woman brings a freshness of approach to management and she stands out in a crowd.

Kiran Bedi

◆ ◆ ◆

I have the arrogance to say that I have never used my position for the benefit of my family.

Renuka Choudhary (Member of Parliament)

◆ ◆ ◆

Forget a married man...
I am having an affair with my work.

Karishma Kapoor (Actress)

◆ ◆ ◆

Sometimes I have had to sacrifice the pleasures of domesticity... at times, I envy the housewife... I wish I could have a better blend, a better ratio of work and home.

Shilpa Shah

◆ ◆ ◆

Thave always been alone. A woman who is successful has to work all alone, and she has to put in far more effort to be regarded on equal terms with her male colleagues. She has to work extra hard. What such a woman needs is solid, dependable backing from her family.

Kiran Bedi

◆ ◆ ◆

I have always wanted a distinct identity for myself, separate from everyone else. The world of business management is still largely dominated by men. So if they have to carve niches for themselves they have to work doubly hard. I have always been very clear about what comes first in my life.

Reena Ramchandran

◆ ◆ ◆

I have missed out on time for leisure, time to cultivate and pursue hobbies...

Justice Sujata Manohar

◆ ◆ ◆

Because of my involvement with film acting, direction, professional theatre work, my role as editor... I don't have a social life.

Aparna Sen (Director, Actress, Editor)

◆ ◆ ◆

I regret having given up marriage for the sake of my career.

Kiran Mazumdar

◆ ◆ ◆

I have sacrified my leisure, golf and my cookery books for my work.

Tara Sinha

◆ ◆ ◆

At work... men and women are thrown together for the eight hours of their working days... it is the rare individual who carries friendship with a colleague of the opposite sex beyond the work place, and when this happens, the relationship is nearly always viewed as suspect.

Girija Prabhakar

◆ ◆ ◆

I am a virgin and I am still at the top.

Mamta Kulkarni

◆ ◆ ◆

I am still at the top and there's room for many more... beautiful dahlias can co-exist with roses, lilies, chrysanthemums.

Meenakshi Seshadhri (Actress)

◆ ◆ ◆

When I decided to join films I asked my grandmother, with whom I stay, if she wanted to have a good life in a hurry, in which case I would sleep my way to the top. She said no, and I decided to struggle and prove my talent instead.

Aishwariya (Actress)

◆ ◆ ◆

I am a Capricorn, a goat. And like a goat,
I'm carefully climbing to the top
of that mountain.

Supriya Pathak (Actress)

◆ ◆ ◆

The one major personal sacrifice I have had to make in order to reach wherever I am today is that I've had to give up time with my children... it is not the quantity of time that matters but the quality of time spent with them.

Usha Uthup (Pop Singer)

◆ ◆ ◆

Frankly, I feel that reaching the top is not always the ambition of creative people. It is your personal commitment to your work that really matters.

Aparna Sen

◆ ◆ ◆

Upon getting the 1994 Magasaysay award
for community service:
It is god's grace. I bow down in humility to
all the persons who matter to me.

Kiran Bedi

◆ ◆ ◆

Legend is a term you gift to
someone really exceptional.

Simi Garewal (Actress)

◆ ◆ ◆

The main thing in business is—if you like what you are doing, it is great fun. Good moments are doing things you hadn't expected, and bad moments are when you are not able to communicate.

Tara Sinha

◆ ◆ ◆

I am not clinging to my success. If it has come to me today, it will go tomorrow. But I will not let go of it so easily.

Monisha Koirala (Actress)

◆ ◆ ◆

In-laws are human beings—when my mother-in-law saw that I cared about her, she returned the affection and never grudged me my career.

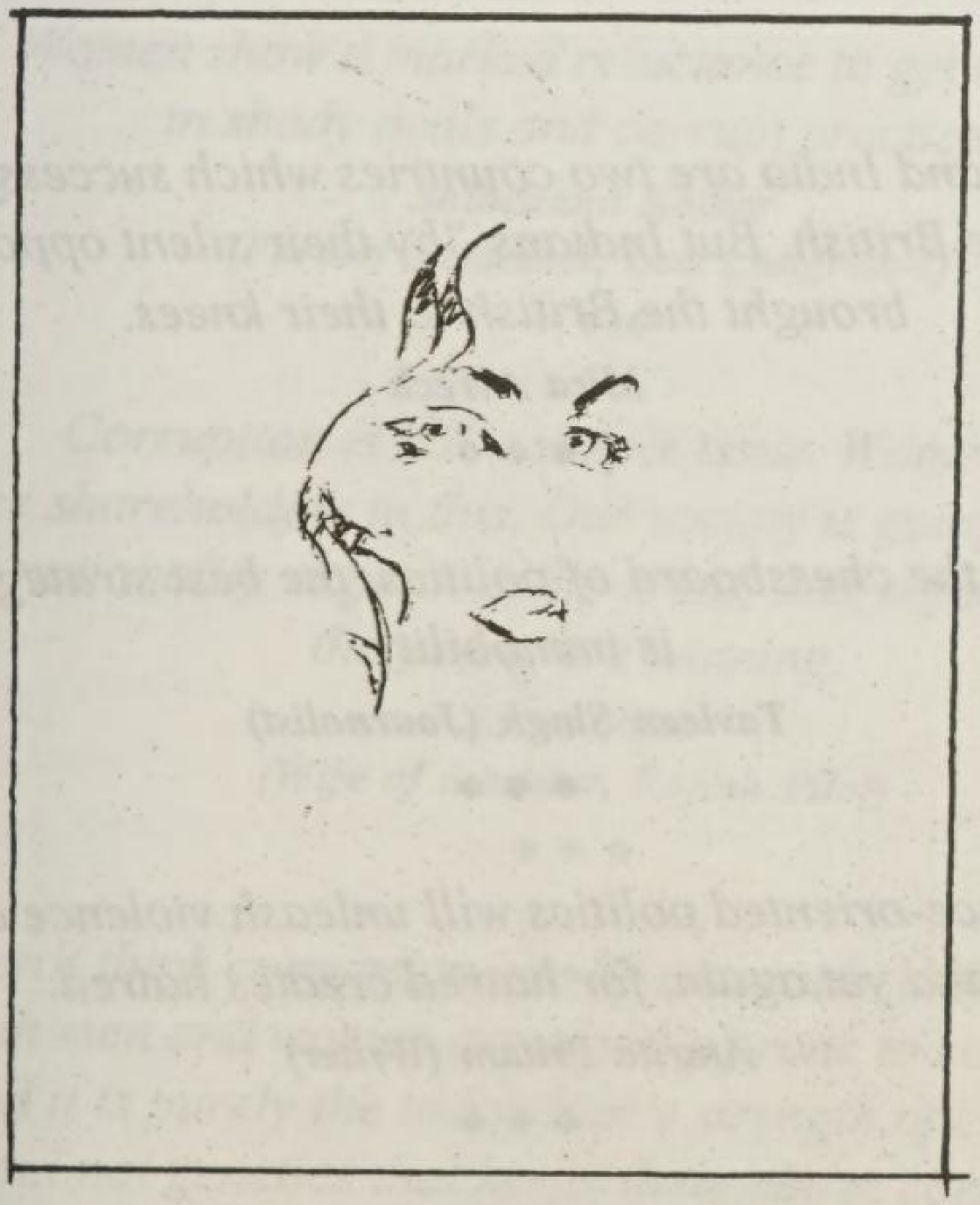
Sushma Swaraj

◆ ◆ ◆

....Work hard, and when you work hard, you establish your credibility, and once you do that, people will follow.

Dr Reena Ramachandran

◆ ◆ ◆



V

Politics / Politicians

Israel and India are two countries which successfully taught the British. But Indians "by their silent opposition" brought the British to their knees.

Mira Avrech

◆ ◆ ◆

On the chessboard of politics, the best strategy is immobility.

Tavleen Singh (Journalist)

◆ ◆ ◆

...violence-oriented politics will unleash violence again and yet again, for hatred creates hatred.

Amrita Pritam (Writer)

◆ ◆ ◆

A woman who enters politics on her own steam is bound to act as a cleansing agent, ridding the system of some of its ills... a woman is not money minded as a man. She will think twice before resorting to underhand means.

Auda Veigas (President, Bailancho Exvott)

◆ ◆ ◆

Given a chance between a male and female politician,
I would plumb for the female.

Uttara Hatarnkar (Housewife)

◆ ◆ ◆

Women show a marked reluctance to get involved
in shady deals and corrupt practices.

Sulochana Katkar
(Former President, Goa Congress-I)

◆ ◆ ◆

Corruption is not a simple issue. Women too
are shareholders in this. Our society is going through
a nationality vs personality crisis, and unfortunately
the wrong are winning.

Rama Pilot
(Wife of minister, Rajesh Pilot)

◆ ◆ ◆

Don't think corruption can be categorized by gender.
Both men and women are equally prone to corruption,
and it is purely the individual's strength of character
and not genetics that keeps them above corruption
or draws them into it.

Nizhat Khan (IPS Officer)

◆ ◆ ◆

In India we have terms of endearment even for our political leaders... Mahatma Gandhi has become 'Bapuji' (father) and Jawaharlal Nehru (late Prime Minister) 'Chacha Nehru' (paternal uncle). Even the moon is referred to as 'Chanda Mama' (maternal uncle) by Indian women.

Sharan Jeet Shan (Writer)

◆ ◆ ◆

Take a good measure of hypocrisy, add to it equal parts of corruption and manipulation, stir in a good ton of verbosity; allow mixture to mature from naive idealism to rank opportunism... and what do yet get? A politician.

Anjana Banagiri Anshu Khanna

◆ ◆ ◆

Indira (ex-prime minister of India) was a better politician than her father, but Nehru was the greater person.

◆ ◆ ◆

Indira was inward looking, secretive and private.

◆ ◆ ◆

Indira wanted to marry, have children, care for her children and her husband in a home filled with books, music and friends.

◆ ◆ ◆

A stable childhood amid the turmoil of the freedom struggle sowed the seeds of insecurity and determination that characterized her politics in later life.

Pupul Jayakar (In "The untold story of Indira Gandhi")

◆ ◆ ◆

Indira's demeanour remained icy in its withdrawal.
There was a fierce pride that she was the head of
a democratic country with a vast population;
a country of the poor. Yet behind her stretched
a millennia of civilization.

One of Mrs Gandhi's secrets was her stamina,
she could outpace any other Indian politician.
In the elections of Andhra and Karnataka, she went
to bed once in sixteen days.

Nirmala Deshpande

◆ ◆ ◆

The silences of Indira Gandhi became famous,
silences which could be opaque, would presage ruthless
responses and silences that were limpid like clear,
sweet lake water that could assuage and welcome.

A journalist asked Indira Gandhi, Prime Minister,
whether it took her a long time to recover from
Kamla's (her mother) death. She replied, "I don't know,
I don't like the word 'recover' because I think that a
wound like this never heals. The scar and the effect
of it are always there in some way... I do think of her
as if she were here quite often..."

Indira's life was part of the unfolding history of India,
intricately woven with India's past and future.

She was both noble and destructive.

Pupul Jayakar

◆ ◆ ◆

Awareness comes from education; unfortunately we in India leave everything to the politician.

Surina Narula

◆ ◆ ◆

The seeds of violence-oriented politics were sowed by politicians in order to divide and rule.

Amrita Pritam (Writer)

◆ ◆ ◆

Sonia Gandhi—daughter-in-law of the Nehru family. The wealth and the power she inherited on the death of her husband and mother-in-law is formidable enough to make her a constant contender to the prime minister's job.

Manisha Shelat

◆ ◆ ◆

I have never heard my husband giving a political speech. Kerala is intelligent enough to decide a politician's worth from his performance.

Amita Unnikrishnan

◆ ◆ ◆

Today a minister's wife has to be actively involved in her husband's campaigns. I believe in shouldering most of Pant Saheb's constituency work.

A politician's fate is decided on the last three days before polling. Forget all the good you do throughout the five years.

I feel that you have to be philosophical if you want to keep your peace of mind in politics.

Ela Pant

◆ ◆ ◆

We are opposed to Brahminvaad,
not Brahmins; against Thakurvaad, *not Thakurs.*

Mayawati (Chief Minister, Uttar Pradesh)

◆ ◆ ◆

The third world's urban slums are growing because of distorted economic priorities and a lack of political commitment to upgrading slums.

Mrs Patel

◆ ◆ ◆

I belonged to a generation that spent its childhood and youth fighting every inch of the way for our basic human rights as citizens to an ancient and honourable land. It was a hard life, of sacrifice and insecurity, of anger and impatience. Yet the hope in our eyes and our hearts never dimmed, for they were beckoned by the star of freedom, by the bright promise of a world without want and exploitation.

Indira Gandhi

◆ ◆ ◆

This Baby is the soul of India... Nehru's daughter was the proudest baby I have ever seen.

Sarojini Naidu (Poetess)

◆ ◆ ◆

My father was a statesman, I am a politician;
my father was a saint, I am not.

Indira Gandhi

(in a rare moment of candour)

◆ ◆ ◆

In a village, a woman was asked if Mrs Gandhi was going to be missed in that area. "Why should we miss her? Her death makes no difference to our daily lives. Our struggle to survive goes on regardless. Did Indira Gandhi truly care for us here?"

Mutuah (A Harijan)

◆ ◆ ◆

I don't mind if my life goes in the service of the nation. If I die, every drop of my blood will invigorate the nation.

Indira Gandhi

◆ ◆ ◆

I would not have left the heaven of my rooms in Rajmahal, if political events had not forced me out to face the whole shoddy and meaningless world of public life again.

Maharani Gayatri Devi

◆ ◆ ◆

Parliament is a zoo... and legislators 'clowns in a circus'

Indira Gandhi

◆ ◆ ◆

Glamour has no role in politics. There is no role in politics for a person who is keenly interested in the colour of her lipstick.

Politics has become the safest, fastest and easiest means to make money.

Sushma Swaraj

◆ ◆ ◆

Gandhi himself might have been 'genuine in his social aspirations' but was exploited by his disciples.

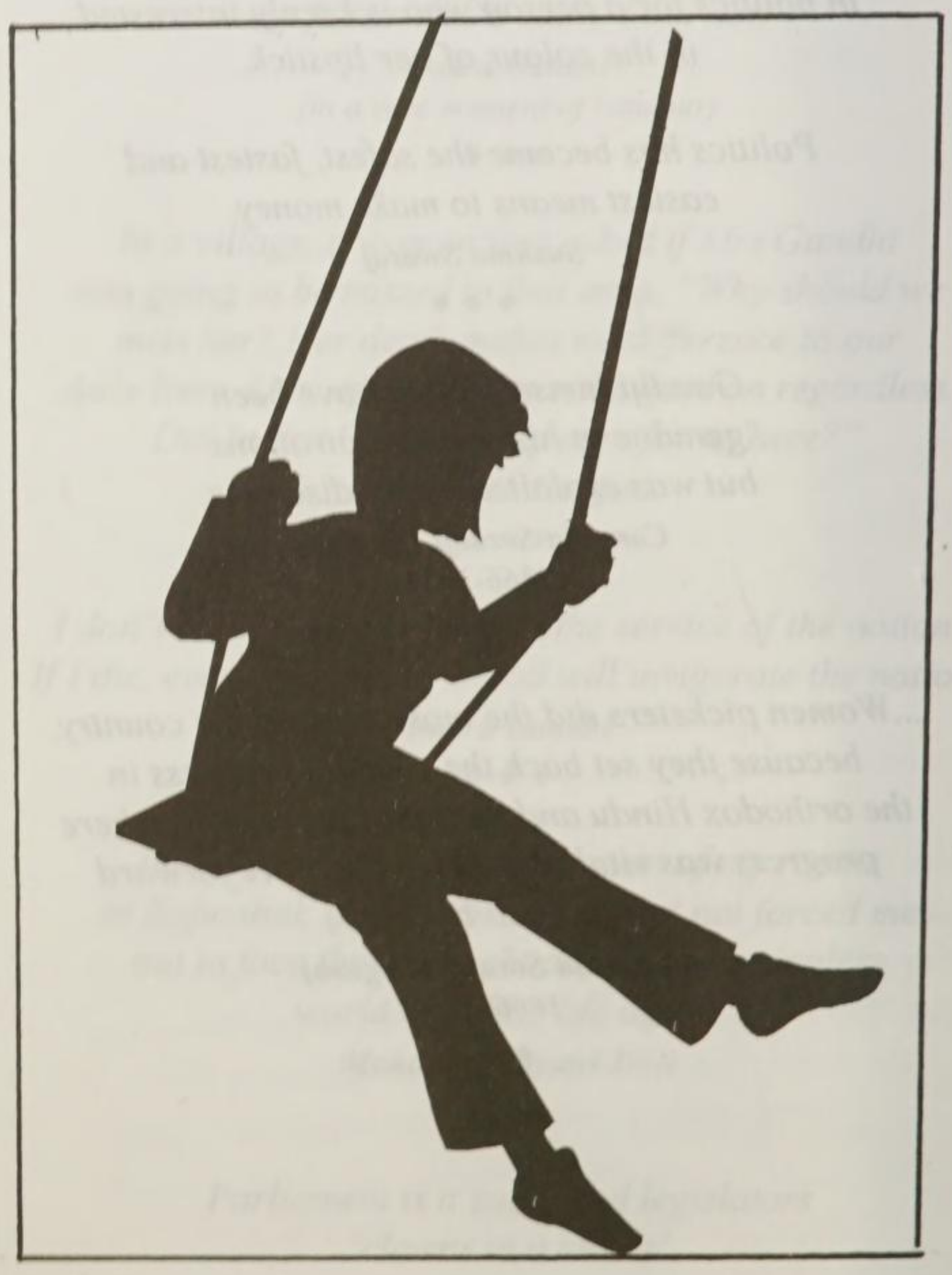
Cornelia Sorabji (English)
1866-1954

◆ ◆ ◆

...Women picketers did the most harm to the country, because they set back the clock of progress in the orthodox Hindu and conservative regions where progress was vital and where the move forward has just begun.

Cornelia Sorabji (English)
1866-1954

◆ ◆ ◆



VI

Children/Childhood/Youth

At school, the teacher frowns if he hasn't completed his homework. Back home, mummy wants him to score over his cousins and all the neighbour's brats. Daddy only likes to hear that he is always on top of the class. And soon on top of the world.

Mani Pande

◆ ◆ ◆

In every house a child is born—not a criminal; it is the society which makes them so.

Asha Dua

◆ ◆ ◆

All women should die after thirty. After that it seems they become frustrated and senile.

Anu Agarwal

◆ ◆ ◆

The days of group studies and exchanging notes are gone. In fact, we do our best to conceal as much information as possible from our classmates.

A student

◆ ◆ ◆

There is no use in trying to turn away from life, from the need to succeed, just because exams and competition are taxing you.

Lakshmi

◆ ◆ ◆

Although a child can hardly be blamed for her parents' premarital affairs, it is she who has to bear the brunt of social stigma and ostracisation.

Bharti Padmanabhan

◆ ◆ ◆

In spite of all talk about equality, especially in terms of distribution of labour at home, parenting usually remains a woman's domain. Being a parent boils down to being a mother, since the father's contribution is usually limited to the conception of the child and nothing more.

Janaki Desai (A teacher)

◆ ◆ ◆

What is it like growing up in a red light area?
It is spending your childhood roaming the streets.
It is sleeping in the day and keeping awake at night.
It is ragpicking. It is serving drunken men beer.
It is being hemmed in by a small stifling world because all other doors are shut tight.

Anjali Joshi

◆ ◆ ◆

Children brought up in a creche tend to be more independent, though a few may lack emotional security, while those brought up at home can be overprotected and thus unable to cope when faced with strict situations later.

Kathy Cama

◆ ◆ ◆

All children are not the same and we need to learn to appreciate the individual talent and strength that each child possesses.

Maya B Kriplani

◆ ◆ ◆

It is the parents who encourage children towards violence by setting role models for them or by showing them violent films instead of urging them to read or be creative.

Mona Nanavati

◆ ◆ ◆

It is important to say 'I love you' to your children too, and not just to your husband or lover...

Arunaraje Patil

◆ ◆ ◆

Where once talking was banned in the classroom, today a child's conversation may be eye opening and wise, in ways never heard before.

Ravina Gandhi

◆ ◆ ◆

Parents who cannot spare enough time for their child tend to shower them with pocket money and expensive toys, which they think can substitute their love.

Ujjani Ray (Behaviour therapist)

◆ ◆ ◆

A little beating is good for all children, provided the beating is followed by a show of affection.

Anurupa

◆ ◆ ◆

In Assam, issueless couples visit the grave of an infant every night for over a year, and beg the soul of the infant to revisit the earth through re-birth. A belief.

Manu Joseph

◆ ◆ ◆

A four-year-old is not satisfied with an answer 'God gives us rain.' Just try imparting some genuine scientific knowledge, and you will be surprised at how well children receive and retain the information.

Ravina Gandhi

◆ ◆ ◆

...in childhood, both boys and girls seem equally endowed with sensibility and intelligence for their age... girls never lag behind boys in intelligence. Parents do not provide any facilities for the education of their daughters, nor do they encourage the pursuit of knowledge.

Bandaru Acchamamba (Telugu)
1874-1904

◆ ◆ ◆

...in my sixteenth year, a question mark seemed to have erected itself against everything... there were so many refusals, so many restrictions, so many denials in the air. I breathed and a fire seemed to be smoldering in every breath. I drew... that sixteenth year is still present somewhere in every year of my life.

Amrita Pritam (Hindi)
Born 1919

◆ ◆ ◆

A boy who is dull-witted as a child is put through the educational machinery and drilled and grilled in many branches of knowledge... result, he becomes successful and earns a name, while his elder sister... as a child was more capable but untouched by education, becomes a first rate ignoramus.

Bandaru Acchamamba (Telugu)
1874-1904

◆ ◆ ◆

VII

Sex/Virginity

My virginity is written on my face. I don't look like a tart, I am not prostitute.

Mamta Kulkarni

◆ ◆ ◆

When a girl leaves her house after her marriage, the most prized possession that she takes to her husband's house in her virginity.

Sridevi (Actress)

◆ ◆ ◆

I don't know the meaning of 'sexy'. I looked up the dictionaries...they said 'sexy' defies the male or female gender.

Karishma Kapoor (Actress)

◆ ◆ ◆

Sex is a glorious celebration of womanhood.

Gautami (Actress)

◆ ◆ ◆

Ten years ago, girls said virginity is their gift to their husbands. Today, tell me which man deserves this gift?

Bhavna Balsavar

◆ ◆ ◆

I haven't renounced writing about sex. If I write truthfully about all the other aspects of life, why exclude sex?

Shoba De (Writer)

◆ ◆ ◆

There is no room for hate and discrimination in our world.

Being a lesbian is not the primary focus of my life. It just happens to be a part of me. Frankly besides the difference in sexual orientation, there is not much difference between homosexual and heterosexual people...

I have no hang-ups about dancing in close contact with another girl at a disco. I lead my life my way. I am proud of myself and most of all, I care a fuck for the world.

We use dental dams which are slightly tougher than latex. It is inserted inside the other woman before having oral sex.

Sarah Singh

◆ ◆ ◆

Woh kahate hai ke maza nahin aata condom ke saath,
ab kya kahein aise mardon ko?
(He says there is no fun in using a condom,
what should one say to such men?)

A prostitute

◆ ◆ ◆

He said he'd have sex with me only when I was fertile.

Radhika

◆ ◆ ◆

Sex, like eating, is a need. A woman can want sex as a man wants it. But if a woman acknowledges that need and wants it, she is labelled a whore.

Pooja Bhatt (Actress)

◆ ◆ ◆

The definition of 'rape' as per our legal system, is penetration into the vagina. But with children, especially at a tender age, penetration is not possible. According to law, no man can be accused of rape if his victim happens to be a child.

Kamini Jaiswal (Senior Adovocate)

◆ ◆ ◆

Sexual harassment—the territory is beyond the couch. It is a home, restaurant, bus, street, office— any place where women and men share a space.

Anita Anand

◆ ◆ ◆

If a little bit of leg is seen, the world goes to pieces.
I really don't know what the fuss is all about...
the heroines of the 50s and 60s were far more revealing.
Tomorrow, they will tell me to cover up my fingernails
too because they are sexy.

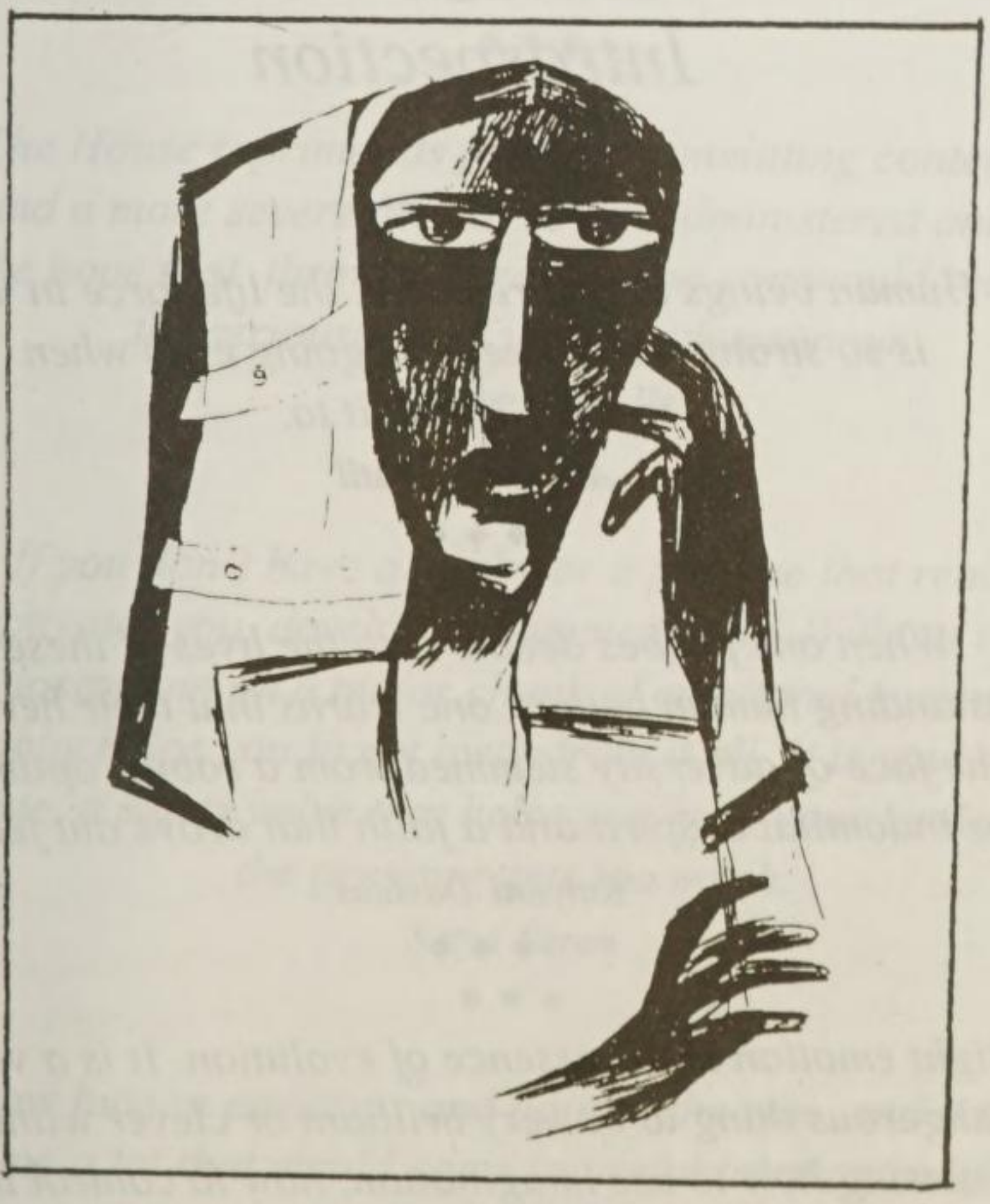
Mamta Kulkarni

◆ ◆ ◆

Partial nudity can be more provocative
than full nudity.

Sushmita Sen
(Miss Universe 1994)

◆ ◆ ◆



VIII

Human Beings/Emotions/ Introspection

Human beings are so resilient, the life force in us is so strong that it keeps us going even when we don't want it to.

Arunaraje Patil

◆ ◆ ◆

When one probes deeper into the lives of these outstanding human beings, one learns that their heroism in the face of adversity stemmed from a robust optimism, as indomitable spirit and a faith that drove out fear.

Kalyani Davidas

◆ ◆ ◆

Right emotion is the essence of evolution. It is a very dangerous thing to be very brilliant or clever without knowing how to use imagination, how to control the emotions. For no matter how clever a man is, he still remains, primarily a creature of emotion.

Rukmini Devi Arundale

◆ ◆ ◆

When you feel full, you are light as air but when you feel empty and hollow you feel an enormous weight crushing you down.

Indira Gandhi

◆ ◆ ◆

The House reprimands you (for committing contempt) and a more severe penalty is not administered only in the hope that through introspection you would realise the seriousness of your misdemeanour.

Najama Heptulla

◆ ◆ ◆

If you don't have a hobby or a pastime that really captivates you, develop one immediately. Without it you are losing out on a major chunk of emotional sustenance. A hobby helps you to get away from it all. It is your escape route, a safety valve that helps you keep your cool when the pressure gets too much.

Satya Saran

◆ ◆ ◆

...I saw human emotions and pain in the raw, and it taught me a lot that would come in useful later on in life.

Arunaraje Patil

◆ ◆ ◆

Pain knows no religion. Tears and the colour of blood are the same in every human being.

asha dua

◆ ◆ ◆

There are stages to pass through: rejection,
depression, acceptance, reconstruction.

Bharati Mukherjee

◆ ◆ ◆

It is important for a woman to find reliance
within herself than seek it from outside.

Rais Fatima

◆ ◆ ◆

A flight of ideas, one is apt to have when alone;
we call it destiny, a solace to console oneself.

Asha Dua

◆ ◆ ◆

Reality can shatter the most beautiful of illusions.

Rais Fatima

◆ ◆ ◆

We can turn our backs to the sun and cast long shadows
on the lives of generations to come, or we can let light
penetrate, illumine the dark patches of the human mind,
renew the earth and conserve human resources.
The choice is ours.

Indira Gandhi

◆ ◆ ◆

... I am struck by the overwhelming quality of calm endurance. It is like a protective armour, a defence mechanism against future shocks based on a desire to preserve the status quo at all costs, because to rock the boat would cause more problems than it would solve.

Radha Rastogi

◆ ◆ ◆

Maybe people thought unpleasant things about me, but nobody said anything to my face. And what we don't know does not hurt us.

Suniti Narayan

◆ ◆ ◆

The human race is born with the need for acquisition. A newborn baby, as soon as he realises where he is, unclasps his tiny hand and wants to grab whatever catches his eye. The need to hoard is instinctive in man, only the packaging has changed. Primeval man, probably tucked away shiny stone and animal skins. We now store everything from memory to future generations.

Bina Menon

◆ ◆ ◆

I have full confidence in your assurance that lord Krishna will appear to me, but I wish to see him soon. At times I feel that I myself am Krishna. It has now become a practice with me to offer Him whatever I think I do... I feel the presence of god, only I cannot see or touch Him. I do not know when I will be able to place my Head at his feet. If only He could appear to me...

Kamala Nehru

◆ ◆ ◆

It is indeed a very rare fortune to be born a human being. Birds and beasts are inferior beings.

Rassundari Devi (Bengali)
Born 1810

◆ ◆ ◆

When human beings are born on earth, the stars immediately enter into close relationship with them, weaving their destiny.

Swarnakumari Devi (Bengali)
1856-1932

◆ ◆ ◆

...Emotions and sensations have their own hunger... once brought to life, they cannot be quelled. They creep into the blood stream, into the veins, they melt in them and simmer there.

Lalithambika Antherjanam (Malayalam)
1909-1987

◆ ◆ ◆

If I am suspended in a vacuum, a dark void in which my whole being is so cold and desensitized that when thoughts and feelings come to me, they seem to come to someone else, and I watch the inner world of that other person as though I stand at a distance...

Meena Kumari Naz (Urdu)
1932-1972

◆ ◆ ◆

Where is this loneliness I hear?
Where does it live?
Inside my agony?
Beyond, in the possibility of love?
Or in the fear of death?

Pravasini Mahakud (Oriya)

◆ ◆ ◆

IX

Art/Craft/Culture/Dance/Music

This world of our cultural ambassadors of poverty—
inherent and invited—complacent, complaining fatalism,
evokes fascination, exasperation, frustration.
Yet their spirit of celebration and abandon leaves you,
in one word, confounded.

Nirupama Sekhri

◆ ◆ ◆

Art is the creative spirit in the world and it is this creative spirit which helps progress.

Culture is the soul, art is the body.

Art can never be apart from life. It cannot be merely an entertainment or it will deteriorate.

Culture is what we cannot afford to take away from any department of life because it is the flowering of life in civilization, and all its forms of expression.

We must show the spiritual aspect in dance, because all our arts in India are spiritual; if dance is not spiritual, it is not art at all, and it is not India either.

All beautiful things bring their own message of beauty, and where there is no beauty, there is no art.

To be cultured, we must express our own selves.

Rukmini Devi Arundale

◆ ◆ ◆

The garment is not a thing but a labour of love and skill... that is imbued with the sensibility of the craftsman and designer who created it.

Asha Sarabhai

◆ ◆ ◆

Sincerity in the artist is essential to life, the portrayal of his art in spirit and in reality.

Rukmini Devi Arundale

◆ ◆ ◆

Art can awaken a sense of identity and you do this to deepen your understanding of self and others.

Usha Mirchandani

◆ ◆ ◆

Art is not based on wealth, people think it is, which is a great mistake.

Reverence towards art is an essential attitude for the Indian artist.

Rukmini Devi Arundale

◆ ◆ ◆

To grow into an accomplished artist...it is the ambience which shapes the song and the voice.

Kalyani Deshmukh

◆ ◆ ◆

The ultimate of literature and art must be to establish peace on this earth.

Kamala Das (Poetess)

◆ ◆ ◆

The highest art is to redeem what is ugly and make it beautiful. It we descend to the level of animals, at least let us emulate their grace and simplicity.

Rukmini Devi Arundale

◆ ◆ ◆

Indian craftsmen are like the shoemaker's elves. They have magic in their hands.

Asha Sarabhai

◆ ◆ ◆

Every artist in an ambassador, both of his art and of his nation.

Rukmini Devi Arundale

◆ ◆ ◆

Music demands devotion and dedication.

Kalyani Deshmukh

◆ ◆ ◆

Designer jewellery means that one has made the effort to create a piece that is exclusive.

Nandini Mohindra

◆ ◆ ◆

Designer jewellery is a short-term fad with no investment value... and no aesthetic quality to it.

Rumila Donan

◆ ◆ ◆

I feel I have a synthesized view of the East and the West with a much wider perspective, be it the approach in my life or my world of Art.

Usha Mirchandani

◆ ◆ ◆

I wish I never have to make a choice between painting and singing, one is food, the other is water.

Anuradha Kshatriya

◆ ◆ ◆

Good music is what comes from within and touches the audience.

Prabha Atre (Classical singer)

◆ ◆ ◆

We are in this profession because we wanted to sing and dance.

Reshma Banu

◆ ◆ ◆

The western audience may be totally ignorant of our culture, but they are receptive to new ideas.

Shanta

◆ ◆ ◆

We are tired of the western culture, people in Sweden are only out for money.

Kristina

◆ ◆ ◆

I worked as a domestic servant under my gurus to get trained in this art.

Hema Malini (Actress)

◆ ◆ ◆

Indian men think dancers are easy lays.

Pratibha Prahlad

◆ ◆ ◆

Dance, like life itself, is a quest—a search for the truth of a moment. A moment of reflection of movement, of feeling, at times one or another of these seems encaptured. Yet the magic is in the moment of their happening together within oneself.

Leela Samson

◆ ◆ ◆

Many gurus *develop a fascination for their students. Its stems from the precious social system of the* devdasis. *When a* guru *gets attached to a ward he believes that the ward is his creation. He has moulded her, seen her every day and night, fed her mind. It is a classic case of someone being in love with his creation. In fact Muthuswami Pillai asked me what was wrong in us having a relationship "How do you expect to get all my art? You have to have a relationship with me to get everything from me."*

Pratibha Prahlad

◆ ◆ ◆

The body is supposed to be a temple but so few people respect it. A dancer can't eat and drink whatever she likes, socialize every night and still demands a peak performance from her body.

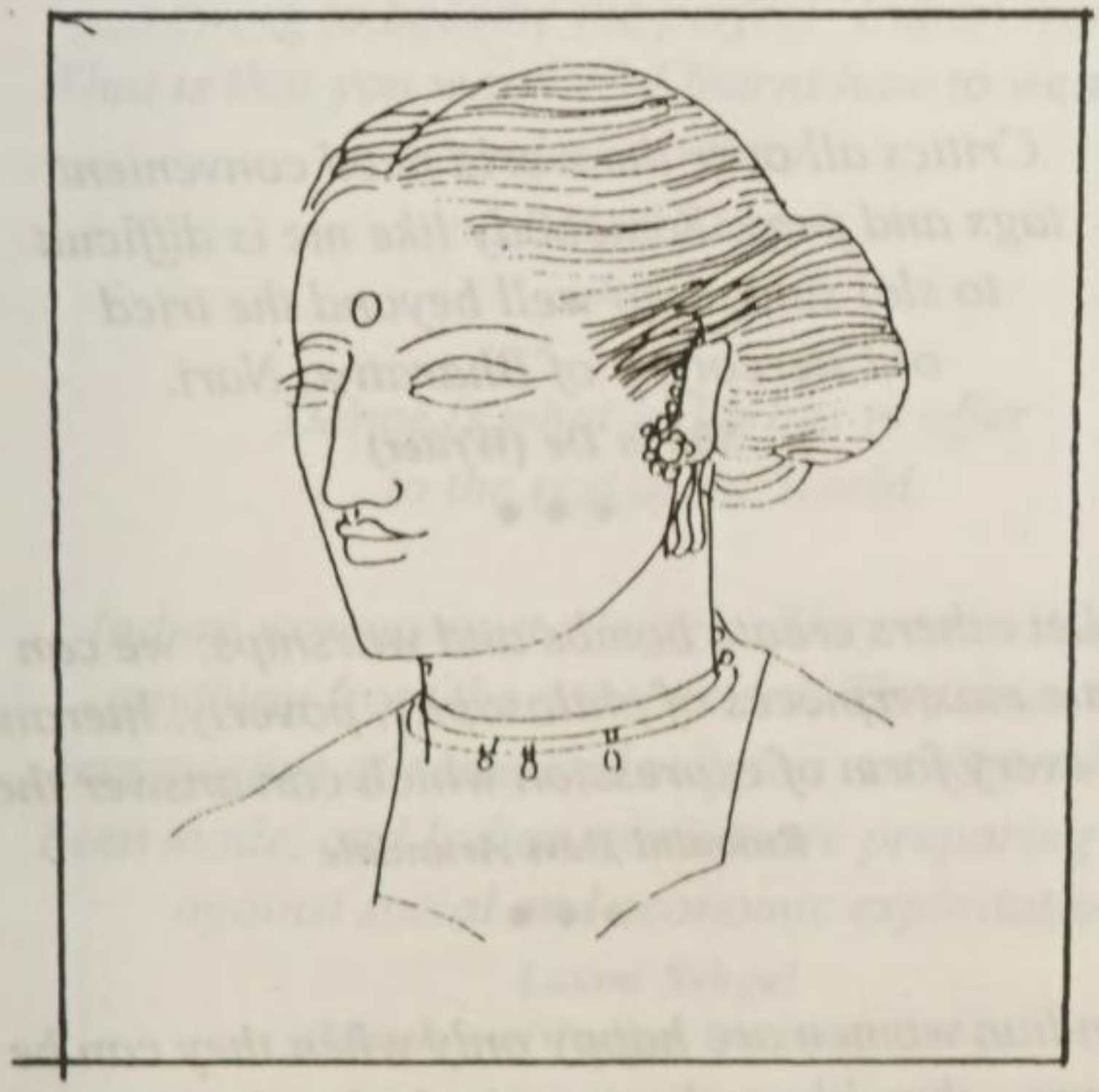
Leela Samson

◆ ◆ ◆

In reply to Dorothy Norman:
"The Nehrus were very unmusical."

Indira Gandhi

◆ ◆ ◆



X

India/Being Indian/ Indian women

Critics all over the world need convenient tags and pegs. Somebody like me is difficult to slot since I go well beyond the tried old stereotype of Bharatiya Nari.

Shoba De (Writer)

◆ ◆ ◆

Let others create bombs and warships; we can create masterpieces of philosophy, poverty, literature and every form of expression which can answer them.

Rukmini Devi Arundale

◆ ◆ ◆

Indian women are happy only when they can be martyrs—they like to lie on a bed of nails, starve, fast, they like all that pain and suffering.

Devika Behl

◆ ◆ ◆

It is impossible for us to live foreign lives.
You and I have Indian bodies, you and I have
Indian aspirations, you and I are patriots.

Rukmini Devi Arundale

◆ ◆ ◆

....vowing to become the perfect 'Indian woman.'
What is that you wonder? I learnt how to wear a sari
and scrub floors.

Parvati Khan

◆ ◆ ◆

Dance is what India has to offer
to the rest of the world.

Indian women must struggle. They cannot expect anything from the government. They must unite irrespective of caste and religion... a beginning has been made, and Indian woman are preparing to fight against social and economic exploitation.

Laxmi Sehgal
(Member of Indian National Army)

◆ ◆ ◆

Under no circumstances will India mortgage
her sovereignty—tell America.

Devika Behl

◆ ◆ ◆

In a big country like India, it is often taken for granted that the poor will always lie in poverty.

Bakul Patel

◆ ◆ ◆

The edifice of democratic India rises on the true foundation of the co-ordinated effort of princes and the people... but for the patriotic co-operation of the princes, the tremendous change that has come over India for the mutual benefit of the people and the rulers would not have been possible.

Maharani Gayatri Devi

◆ ◆ ◆

For a bottle of cream with a label that says, 'made in India' to stand next to international brands... it is like selling champagne of the French.

Vinita Jain

◆ ◆ ◆

Wealth, power, style and glamour— there is plenty of that in India.

Manisha Shelat

◆ ◆ ◆

In spite, however, of all these drawbacks, there is in India, many a happy and loving couple that would be an honour to any nation.

Pandita Ramabai Saraswati (English)
1858-1922

◆ ◆ ◆

XI

Religion/Philosophy/Life/ Psychology

Religion has been the dispenser of death,
secularism is only skin deep.

K V Prema

◆ ◆ ◆

Life is like an endless road. But both the cases have an end. Be it life, with death ahead or a road where destiny bends. But life and road are never together afloat 'cause along the road, the moment you stop, there comes your destiny. But life is not the name of a pause, it is but a moving symphony.

Mahasweta Ghosh Roy

◆ ◆ ◆

More people have been killed in the name of religion than any other cause.

K V Prema

◆ ◆ ◆

There is nothing greater in life than inspiration.
If you can inspire people you are really fulfilling life,
and the fulfilling of life is our goal.

Rukmini Devi Arundale

◆ ◆ ◆

Life in the backwaters is exotic; a far cry from life anywhere else in the world.

Sathya Saran

◆ ◆ ◆

Hinduism is the only philosophy in the world where the woman does not come out of the man.

Mallika Sarabhai (Dancer)

◆ ◆ ◆

Young muslims expect their moderation to bear fruit. They are not willing to be pushed beyond a point.

Subhasini Ali

◆ ◆ ◆

Don't we face situations where most people are coming down the crowded staircase and we have to fight our way up? Most give up; only a few brave people attempt it. Indeed life begins with these simple, thoughtful experiences.

Mamuni Patnaik

◆ ◆ ◆

When religion instead of forging human relationship, sparks off senseless violence, it would be prudent to compel man to express his religious feelings only within his house and temple. No outward show of religious fervour should be allowed.

K V Prema

◆ ◆ ◆

Life has been a struggle, always a head-on collision with difficult circumstances.

Sheela Naskar

◆ ◆ ◆

I find more Muslim girls fighting it out with parents to continue their education. They want to succeed and not end up as dropouts.

Huma Nizami

◆ ◆ ◆

Persistence and confidence can see you through difficult times.

Asha Dua

◆ ◆ ◆

Every human being would like to 'die with his boots on'... life does not work that way.

Jamuna Sujir

◆ ◆ ◆

Kleptomania is an attention-calling device,
a distress signal that centers around deprivation
of some kind.

Anshu Khanna

◆ ◆ ◆

Hindus and Muslims both have a common enemy— the
real enemy is the poverty that is killing our children and
ruining our lives. I ask these people to join hands.

Vanita Patil

◆ ◆ ◆

Secularism means the freedom to subscribe to
any religious faith, not freedom to ventilate the
inherent bestialities in man.

K V Prema

◆ ◆ ◆

For years we did what the moulanas wanted.
And see where they have landed us. Now even they will
not be able to stop the change.

Sameena and Uzma Usmani

◆ ◆ ◆

Humility is not hurting other's feelings and
that is the highest form of religion.

Dilshad

◆ ◆ ◆

...I am, it is true, a member of the Church of Christ but I am not bound to accept every word that falls from the lips of priests or bishops. Obedience... to the word of God is quite different from perfect obedience to priest only.

Pandita Ramabai Saraswati (English)
1858-1922

◆ ◆ ◆

Where shall we seek for meaning?
In wisdom's court or in the life of sorrow?

Sayida Zaidi (Urdu)
Born 1926

◆ ◆ ◆

Bit by bit the day has ended
The night is all in shreds
To each of us is given just as much
As we can carry.

Meena Kumari Naz (Urdu)

◆ ◆ ◆

Like pure milk
Like old rice of many years
Scrubbed and washed the earthen pot of my heart
On the finger of life
Memories tighten like a troublesome ring
As if from the goldsmith of time
Grains of sand have slipped between

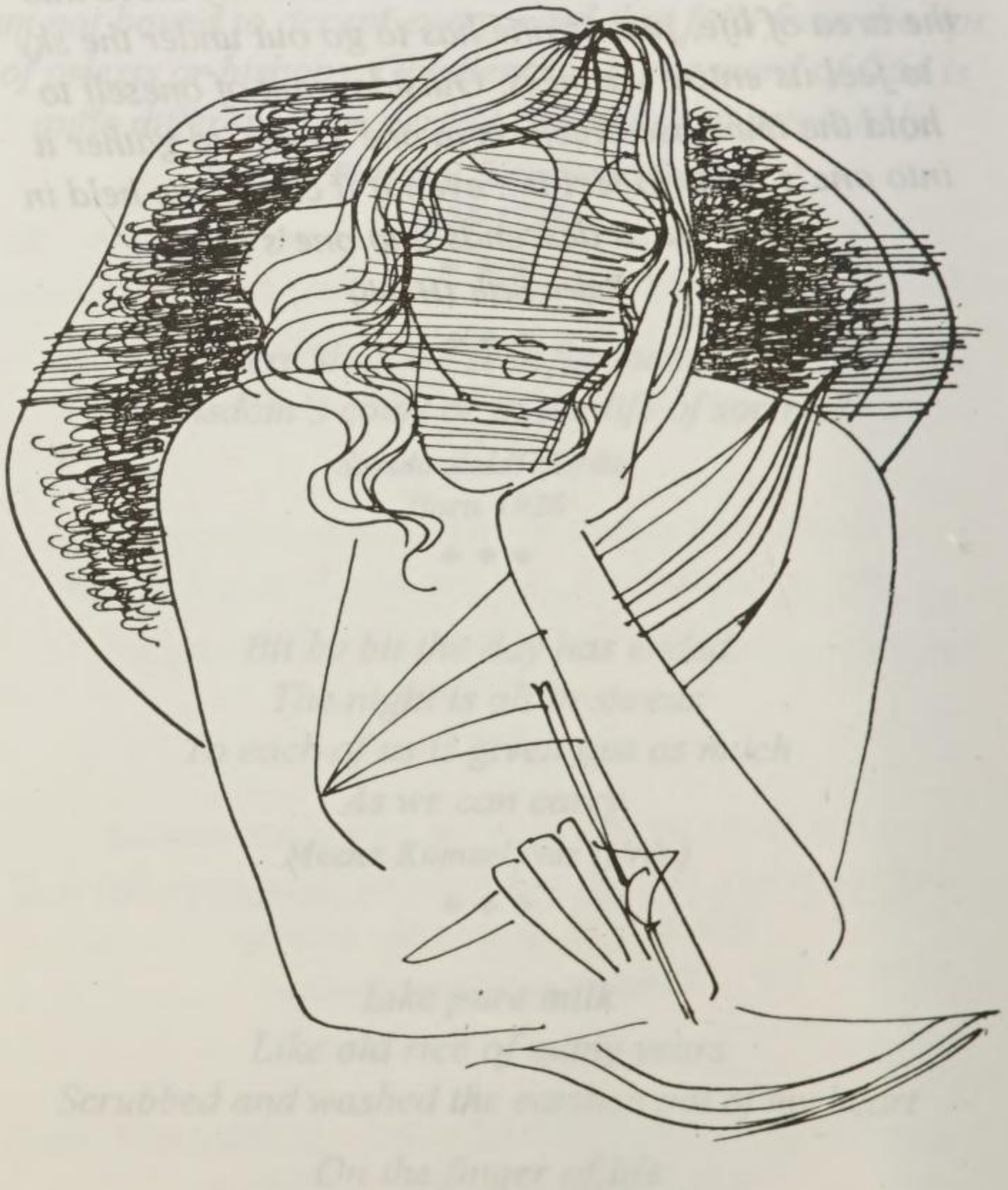
Amrita Pritam (Hindi)
Born 1919

◆ ◆ ◆

To know its dimensions, one has to actually move into the area of life, just as one has to go out under the sky to feel its entire vastness. Outside—out of oneself to hold the immense blueness in one's eyes, to gather it into one's arms to feel it... even if it cannot be held in the arms, it descends into one's eyes.

Rajee Seth (Hindi)

◆ ◆ ◆



XII

Language/Poetry/Writing

I speak three languages, write in two
and dream in one.

Kamala Das (Poetess)

◆ ◆ ◆

I do find the physical act of writing—of putting pen to paper—awfully sensual. Almost erotic, that is why I refuse to switch to a P.C.

Shoba De (Writer)

◆ ◆ ◆

You have to strip every trace of sentimentality, romantic inclination, silly symbols and all that from a poem for it to reflect its authenticity.

Kamala Das (Poetess)

◆ ◆ ◆

Recitation is a great communication channel between the author and the audience.

Pranati Thakur

◆ ◆ ◆

Handwriting and signatures show a great deal
of variation over a set period of time for any individual.
No signature or handwriting ever retains
a set pattern or consistency.

C V Jayadevi

◆ ◆ ◆

A poem is a time capsule, it cannot bring forth
any falsehood.

Kamala Das (Poetess)

◆ ◆ ◆

Writing is the clearest, most visible therapy; you can
see, read, and analyse what you have written.

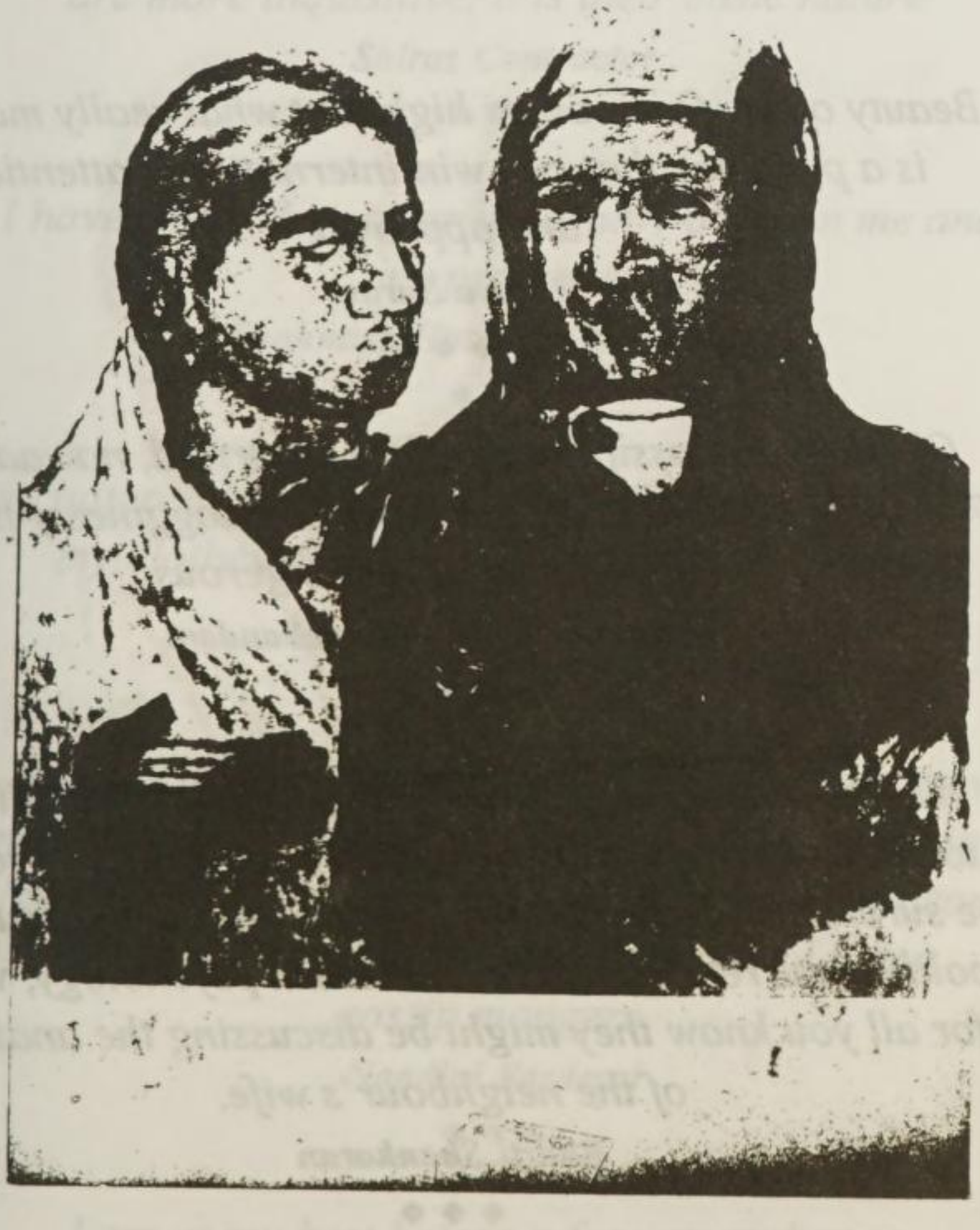
Kiran Bedi

◆ ◆ ◆

As honey sweetens
the mouth readily
a poem should make sense
right away.

Atukuri Molla, first woman Telugu writer
Early 16th century

◆ ◆ ◆



XIII

Gossip/Beauty/Clothes

Beauty of the face counts high, but what really matters is a presence that can win international attention and approval.

Satya Saran

◆ ◆ ◆

Oh, men do gossip, you will be surprised, nowadays male bitchiness (or shall we say dogginess) is in vogue and more dangerous.

Manu and Kishin Moolchandani

◆ ◆ ◆

When women gossip, they gossip, and it is perceived to revolve around kids, servants, and furniture (you'd be surprised). But when men gossip, they are discussing politics, current affairs or individual psychology, when for all you know they might be discussing the anatomy of the neighbour's wife.

Bharti Shankaran

◆ ◆ ◆

Men gossip to boost their own ego...sit at a bar and even if they have not seen a girl, will say that they have slept with her and had a good time. Men like to show off. Women gossip about everything and anything, women are more inquisitive, it is their basic nature.

Shiraz Contractor

◆ ◆ ◆

I have created a powerful identity between me and my products.

Shahnaaz Hussian (Beautician)

◆ ◆ ◆

In a cluttered world of noise, confusion, and profusion... my clothes offer a feeling of calm simplicity.

Asha Sarabhai

◆ ◆ ◆

Men gossip only among themselves, while women gossip even in the presence of men. Their gossiping is therefore more visible. This could be the reason why women have attracted the label of being gossip mongers.

Nandini Sardesai

◆ ◆ ◆

I am at my best before a foreign audience.

Shahnaaz Hussian (Beautician)

◆ ◆ ◆

Gossiping is a universal phenomenon,
it transcends race, caste, class and the sexes,
it is a 'put them down that picks me up.'

Bharti Shankaran

◆ ◆ ◆

Women no longer dress up or try to look good for men alone, that is pass... the done thing is to look good for oneself.

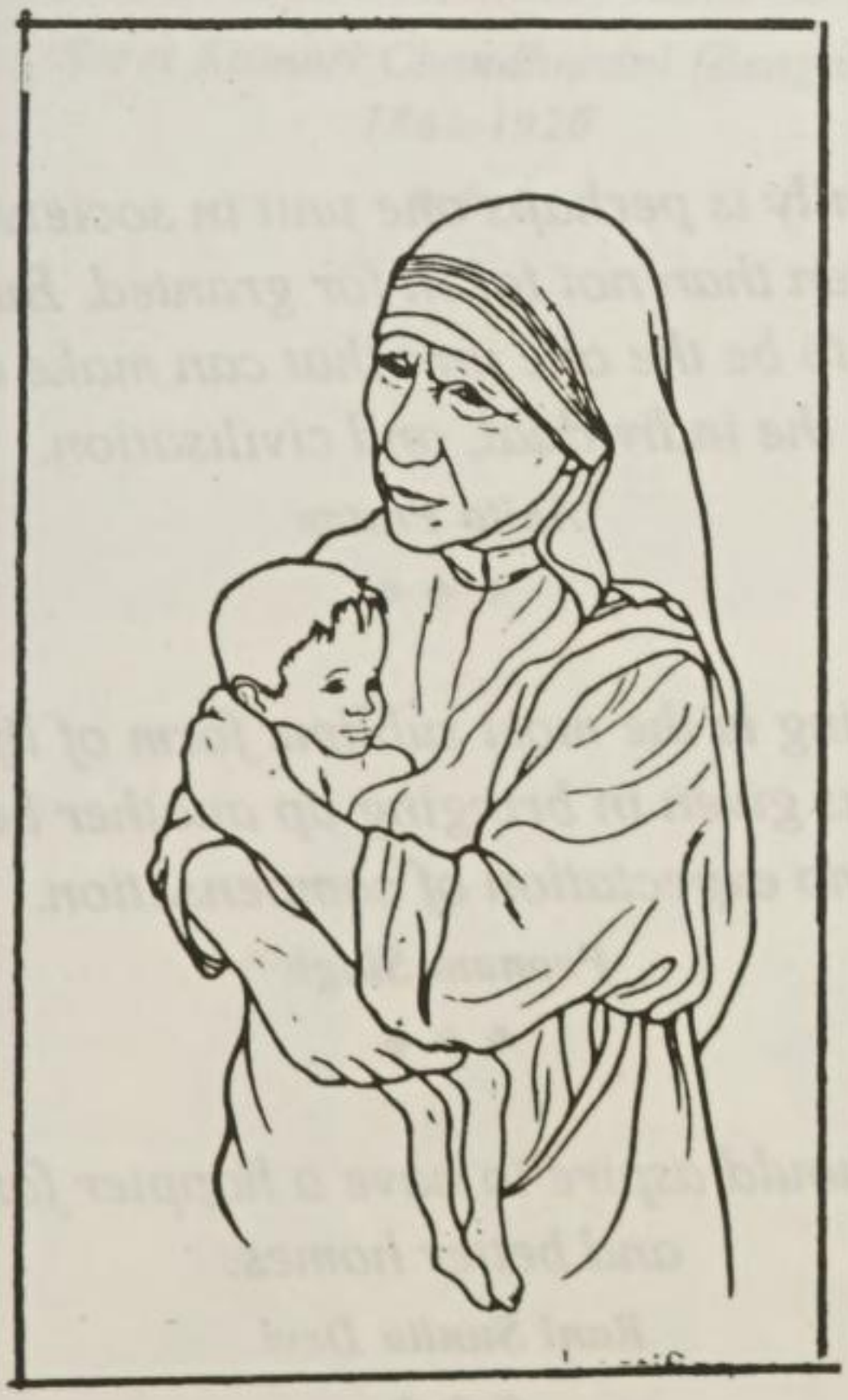
Satya Saran

◆ ◆ ◆

Makeup does make you feel different. But it shouldn't make a different person out of you.

Rosie D'Neil

◆ ◆ ◆



XIV

Motherhood/Family

The family is perhaps one unit in society that is more often than not taken for granted. But it also happens to be the one unit that can make or break the individual, and civilisation.

Anita Pratap

◆ ◆ ◆

Nurturing is the most sublime form of life, for a lifetime is given in bringing up another being with no expectation of compensation.

Poonam Singh

◆ ◆ ◆

Women should aspire to have a happier family life and better homes.

Rani Sunita Devi

◆ ◆ ◆

A mother is the most affectionate person in the world, the representative of God on earth!

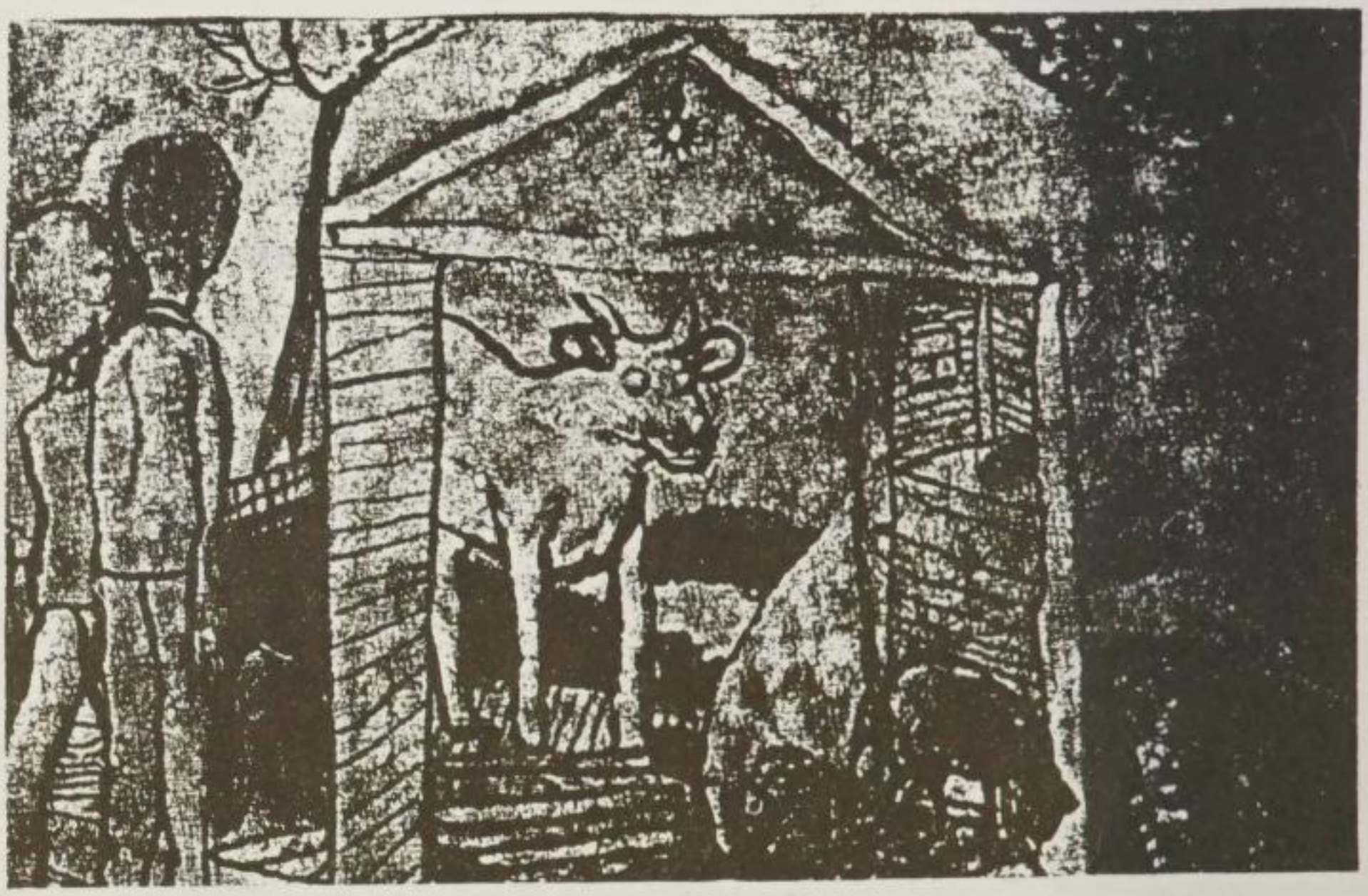
Rassundari Devi (Bengali)
Born 1810

◆ ◆ ◆

A family, however wealthy it is, you can see for yourself how mismanaged and neglected a household looks without a woman to look after it, and how uncared for the children look when they have no mother.

Sarat Kumari Chaudharani (Bengali)
1861-1920

◆ ◆ ◆



XV

Nature/Animals/Vegetarianism/ Nonviolence

In nature which is eternally cultured, we find
a silent beauty that uplifts humanity.

Rukmini Devi Arundale

◆ ◆ ◆

Regardless of other attainments, a person
blind to the needs of animals cannot
be deemed complete.

Amala Akkineni

◆ ◆ ◆

She loved dogs as a child; and that is how
Leela Ratnam found herself becoming, among a
dozen other things, a trained judge of show dogs—
and world's only sari-clad dog judge!

Lilly Ratnam

◆ ◆ ◆

Rambo, my Alsatian, if he were a man
I would have married him.

Racheal Reuben

◆ ◆ ◆

The flowers may be small but the fragrance they spread is enough to refresh you after a tiring day...

B.N. Maheshwari

◆ ◆ ◆

Whenever people come to me professing their love for animals and offering to volunteer services for me, I let my dogs after them. The way they react to the animals will tell me whether or not I should do business with them.

Amala Akkineni

◆ ◆ ◆

Eating fish is neither good for you nor good for the fish. And the end of fish will mean the end of the ocean, the end of life.

Maneka Gandhi

◆ ◆ ◆

I have never enjoyed wearing silk. I own just one silk saree.... i.e., ahimsa silk... silk saree made under traditional methods. It is important to realise that it is made of threads remaining after the insect larva comes out of the cocoon naturally.

Amala Akkineni

◆ ◆ ◆

How delightful is the season when the jasmine-creeper and the mango tree seem thus to unite in mutual embraces! The fresh blossoms of the jasmine resemble the bloom of a young bride and the newly formed shoots of the mango appear to make it her natural protector.

Shakuntala (daughter of the Sage Vishwamitra)

◆ ◆ ◆

Hoping to blossom (one day) into a flower
Every bud sits, holding its soul in its fist.

Mahlaqa Bai Chanda (Urdu)
1767-1824

◆ ◆ ◆

My scale for judging people is simple.
I observe the way they treat servants,
children and animals.

Amala Akkineni

◆ ◆ ◆

When you attempt to compare the suffering of animals with ours, you realise that ours is nothing at all.

Rajalakshmi Mani

◆ ◆ ◆

I have never felt disgusted when I care for sick animals. I do experience disgust though, whenever I come face to face with human insensitivity.

Amala Akkineni

◆ ◆ ◆

XVI

Miscellaneous

I just can't bear time to fly away unnecessarily.

Dr Indira Goswami

◆ ◆ ◆

Empires were made and lost, history was given new twists and turns in the pursuits of the libidinous.

Malvika Kaul

◆ ◆ ◆

All individuals, no matter what they do should be treated with dignity.

Ratna Kantherla

◆ ◆ ◆

Youth and youthful relationships are the new mantras that advertisers seem to be cashing in on, as increasingly, consumers feel younger than they look, and don't mind voting for that illusion with their wallets.

Kaveree Bamzai (Journalist)

◆ ◆ ◆

What is the use of freedom to man, if his soul is not free to express itself.

Rukmini Devi Arundale

◆ ◆ ◆

Variety is the spice of spouse.

Malvika Kaul

◆ ◆ ◆

I don't have time to brood now. When you work for a cause, you get extra strength.

Krishna Venkatesan

◆ ◆ ◆

Ideas are nobody's property; they belong to whoever expresses them best.

Emilia Cecchi

◆ ◆ ◆

Security means finding contentment within yourself, being in a crowd and yet being able to communicate with yourself, most of all making the most of one's capabilities.

Pasha Jung

◆ ◆ ◆

...We do not need time in order to help. Let us use beautifully the time we really have. Let us not forget that the most wonderful thing in life is kindness, gentleness and tenderness.

Rukimini Devi Arundale

◆ ◆ ◆

Reality is very drab. It is as drab as white khaddar.

Kamala Das (Poetess)

◆ ◆ ◆

....Women should be wary of these high society hypocrites filled with double standards.

Rajnee Singh

◆ ◆ ◆

He told me. "Hamari beti ne apne liye ma dhoondi hai (our daughter has found a mother for herself).

Reena Roy (Actress)

◆ ◆ ◆

The very best time to engage the other creatively is during times of crisis. Sometimes it takes suffering to move into the 'we' and out ot the 'I.'

Sherry Suib

◆ ◆ ◆

The greatest danger to humanity is man. The nation, the race, really means only one individual. We have to come for the answer to all questions, back to the individual.

Rukimini Devi Arundale

◆ ◆ ◆

A bartender has to be inconspicuous and invisible, felt but not seen.

Pearl Dias

◆ ◆ ◆

The brain is so intricate that it can be compared to the wiring in a large electronic power house.

Dr Gomati Gopal Nath

◆ ◆ ◆

The nations of the West have shown a tremendous advance in modern scientific development and the growth of technology. They are so scientific, they have made everything scientific even the killing of people and animals.

Rukmini Devi Arundale

◆ ◆ ◆

I think any sensitive person who looks around himself or herself is bound to have what are known as leftist leanings.

Shabana Azmi (Actress)

◆ ◆ ◆

Turmoil is the price one pays for
not surrendering to injustice.

Kiran Bedi

◆ ◆ ◆

I was being taken as some bloody charitable institution.

Kimi Katkar (Actress)

◆ ◆ ◆

When I took over a sick company, I told my staff
that either we survive together or I would write
an obituary note for the company.

C T M Suguna (IAS Officer)

◆ ◆ ◆

Heavily subsidized higher education is yet another gift
of Nehruvian socialism. Another offering at the altar
of cheap populism, which in the early fifties went by
the name of idealism. It was a foolish idea then.
It is a dangerous one.

Tavleen Singh (Journalist)

◆ ◆ ◆

Justice always comes at a price.

Kiran Bedi

◆ ◆ ◆

When you write to your friend, let your letterhead
convey the warmth and affection of your personality.

Sujata Bajaj (Artist)

◆ ◆ ◆

We must understand and accept that every person can't be interpreted in black and white. There are so many layers to every person, to every woman. Human nature cannot be pigeon-holed.

Lekha J Shankar

◆ ◆ ◆

Dr Mrinalinidevi Puar of Dhar Estate... she is a woman in control of her wealth and her destiny. But her status as chancellor and academician obviously means more to her than her royal lineage.

Manisha Shelat

◆ ◆ ◆

Sexuality is in the news. As it were, the media is using the female form to advertise projects and sell products.

Shanta Dhananjay

◆ ◆ ◆

Experience enables you to recognise a mistake everytime you repeat it.

Brahmakumaris

◆ ◆ ◆

I would like someone to analyse my destiny, for the controversies are never my own creation.

Kiran Bedi

◆ ◆ ◆

Calcutta has a number of Mukherjees, Chatterjees, and Banerjees, but it has no energy.

Dolly Thakore

◆ ◆ ◆

Gone are the days when the term ' child's play' implied simplicity and ease.

Brinda Upadhyaya

◆ ◆ ◆

If a mother can kill her own child, what is there to stop you and me from killing each other?

Mother Teresa

◆ ◆ ◆

Management—a background which provides organizational ability and a scientific approach to problem solving.

Usha Mirchandani

◆ ◆ ◆

Get yourself on the road towards having a healthy and profitable lifelong affair with your own sweet self.

Ela Pant

◆ ◆ ◆

Self esteem is a quality that grows with experience...

Noel Keymer

◆ ◆ ◆

I have no qualms about exposing or kissing on the screen provided I'm convinced it's necessary.

Mamta Kulkarni

Selling one's house and changing jobs and cities is healthy.

Bharati Mukherjee

◆ ◆ ◆

Extreme views are good for sales. Who needs lukewarm wishy washy 'safe' responses?

Shoba De (Writer)

◆ ◆ ◆

We Nehrus do not cry.

Indira Gandhi

◆ ◆ ◆

Sincerity of purposes is all important. Go into social service or do a paid job, but do it with sincerity.

Renuka Roy

◆ ◆ ◆

We may be depriving the princes of luxury, but we are giving them the opportunity to be men.

Indira Gandhi

◆ ◆ ◆

Disease, death and sorrow, the theme song of the third world.

Bakul Patel

◆ ◆ ◆

I was tremendously impressed with my grand father's business—I don't mean physically—but you know, he seemed to embrace the whole world. I loved the way he laughed.

Indira Gandhi

◆ ◆ ◆

Poverty has many components—not having enough to eat, not having enough clothes or decent housing. For fathers and mothers it means not being able to care for your children properly. And for children it means having little hope of any improvement in their lives. Poverty also means disease, death and sorrow.

Bakul Patel

◆ ◆ ◆

In most Indian homes you have jealousy. But in my mother's case I don't think it was only a question of jealousy directly towards her. It was a sort of a clash of personalities. People find it difficult to understand somebody who is entirely different.

Indira Gandhi

◆ ◆ ◆

I like to share my happiness and spread smiles in this land of suffering.

asha dua

◆ ◆ ◆

In the ultimate analysis, self esteem comes from within and what we should all strive at most is to be good, complete human beings.

Margaret Alva

◆ ◆ ◆

The list of taxpayers is... no indication that he/she is amongst the richest persons in the country. In fact several industrialists are very proud of the fact that they do not pay any tax at all.

Manisha Shelat

◆ ◆ ◆

Money is important as long as it is put to social use.

Maharani Shantadevi Gaekwar

◆ ◆ ◆

Obviously the sun has not set on the Windsor empire, or else queen Elizabeth II wouldn't be the richest woman in the world.

Manisha Shelat

◆ ◆ ◆

However talented and hardworking you may be, luck is a vital factor.

Chitra (Musician)

◆ ◆ ◆

Entertaining at home is a matter of prestige and honour for stars.

Zeenat Aman (Actress)

◆ ◆ ◆

Everytime a producer has a lavish bash at a five star hotel, with seven and a half film stars and twenty five journalists attending it, he goes home with the smug satisfaction that he has thrown the best party of the decade.

Bharati Pradhan (Journalist)

◆ ◆ ◆

Daffy definitions:

Friend	:	*One who has the same enemies you have.*
Cheap	:	*A sound made by an inexpensive bird.*
Lipstick	:	*Glue for holding the mouth shut.*
Grandfather	:	*A father who is terrific.*
Tulips	:	*The standard number of lips assigned to each person.*

Nemazie Ahuja

◆ ◆ ◆

As for best friends—don't talk to me about best friends, but women have also been my worst enemies.

Arunaraje Patil

◆ ◆ ◆

Head was shaved in keeping with the humiliating customs of the times... more painful than death.

Rassundari Devi (Bengali) Born 1810

◆ ◆ ◆

....hear a lizard call when you are about to go on a journey, don't go out that day, a monkey's face shouldn't be the first thing you see in the morning, nothing should be cut during a lunar eclipse, if you are ill you should wear a magic amulet round your neck.

Hannah Catherine Mullens (Bengali)
1826-1861

◆ ◆ ◆

Lack of learning is nothing but gross bestiality.

Savithribai Phule (Marathi)
1831-1897

◆ ◆ ◆

Mirabai... a woman rejecting the worship of the husband and the enslavement it implies; choosing instead, a higher symbol of the divine in which her passionate heart can find something more satisfying and enlarging.

Pandita Ramabai Saraswati (English)
1858-1922

◆ ◆ ◆

I have to stand up for my rights from my childhood.
I had not then learnt the beauty of silence.

Krupa Sattianadan (English)
1862-1894

◆ ◆ ◆

....there was no punishment more terrible than silence.

Ramabai Ranade (Marathi)

◆ ◆ ◆

During my life I found no return, no reward.
Lord! may my work find acceptance when I am gone.

My last wish is this, that those who care for me
May strew a few flowers on my grave when I am gone.

Sughra Humayun Mirza (Urdu)
1884-1954

◆ ◆ ◆

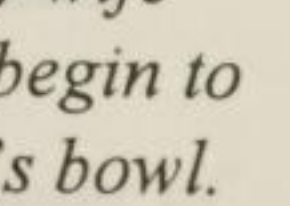
I did not take a single paisa when I brought my wife home. Just think, we have eleven children. If we begin to buy sons-in-law, we will end up with the beggar's bowl.

K Saraswathi Amma (Malayalam)
1919-1975

◆ ◆ ◆

Stop being childish!
How will you build castles
from the ashes
of these blasted cities?

Zahida Zaidi (Urdu) Born 1930



◆ ◆ ◆

Why should I worship you who never can
Bestow on me a single gift that lasts?
Is the noble human life like that of beasts
Which live to daily riot and gorge themselves?

Mary John Thottam (Malayalam)
1901-1985

◆ ◆ ◆

Grandmother often used to say that attending
a single birth is as good, as meritorious, as making
a pilgrimage to Kashi.

M K Indira (Kannada)
Born 1917

◆ ◆ ◆

Once falls a heritage, once a maid yields
Her maidenhood, once doth a father say,
'Choose I abide by choice,' these three things done,
Are done forever

Savithri in Bhagvad Gita.

◆ ◆ ◆

To see kings once is lawful a second time
it is forbidden. I shall not come.

Gulbadan Begum (Persian)
1563-1603

◆ ◆ ◆

My husband was a religious mendicant by profession but a man of very angry disposition...he could not control his rage, just like a fire out of control. My body accepted it; who can ward off the force of fate.

Bahinabai Chaudhari (Marathi)
1628-1700

◆ ◆ ◆

....If the main object of wearing ornaments is to display a husband's wealth... why don't you decorate your pet dog with your necklace? When you go riding on your horse carriage, deck your horse with your beautiful ornaments... bracelets and bangles as curtain rings in your drawing room... proper way of being extravagant with your husband, the Nawab's money.

Rokeya Sakhawat Hussain (English)

◆ ◆ ◆

Very few suitors offer to marry the daughter of poor parents, though they may be from high caste families. Wealth has its own pride and merit in India, as everywhere else in the world... even this powerful wealth is as nothing before caste rule.

Pandita Ramabai Saraswati (English)
1858-1922

◆ ◆ ◆

We can do no great things—only small things
with great love.

I am a little pencil in the hand of a writing God
who is sending a love letter to the world.

I do not pray for success. I ask for faithfulness.

Loneliness and the feeling of being unwanted
is the most terrible poverty.

Mother Teresa
1910-1997

◆ ◆ ◆

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Mother Teresa
1910-1997

The *'bindi'* has come to represent tradition, grace, beauty... and at another level, servility, exploitation, suffering. There are several more; perhaps as many as are the faces of the Indian woman today. Here is a glimpse of today's versatile Indian woman. This collection also includes, as a contrast, thoughts of women from yesteryears.

Women are not people to be pitied.
Deepti Naval

Parliament is a 'zoo' ...and legislators, clowns in a circus.
Indira Gandhi

I haven't renounced writing about sex. If I write truthfully about all the other aspects of life, why exclude sex?
Shoba De

I believe in parliament, if a woman is articulate, attractive and aggressive, then she is 'cheez.' It is ludicrous! I may be a public servant, but I am certainly not public entertainment.
Renuka Choudhary

I want her (my daughter) to be free of guilt. The guilt of being an unmarried woman, a nonworking wife, a nonworking caring mother, a working negligent mother! I want her to be not guilty, free from the dilemmas that have riddled our lives. I'd like her to experience the joy of partnership in marriage and he a professional highflier.
Mridula Sood

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